Glimpses of the World of

ATHEISM

Dr. Surendra Ajnat

SAMYAK PRAKASHAN

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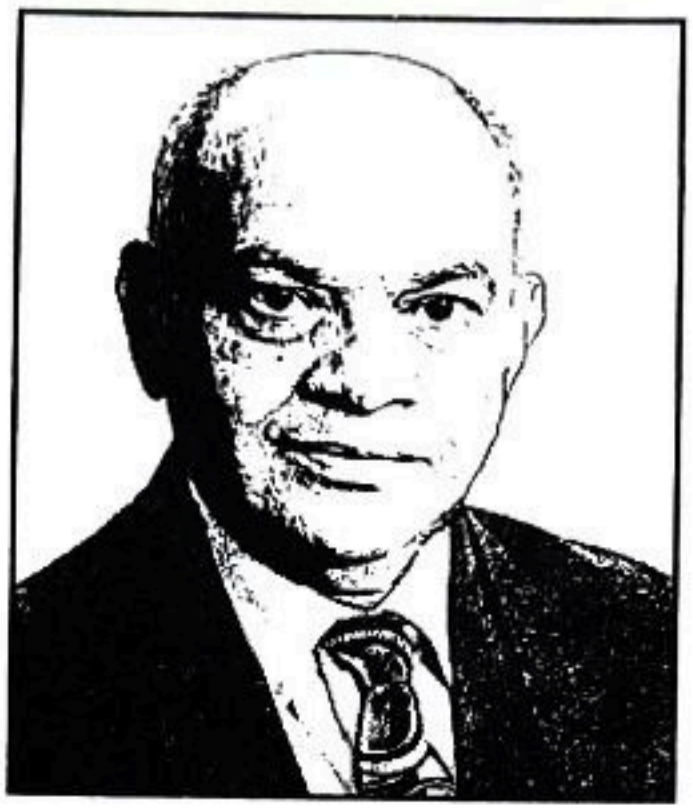

जयन्ति सुकृतिनः शांतिस्वरूपबौद्धाचार्याः, येषां यशःकाये नास्ति जरामरणजम्भयम्.

Inscribed to the memory

of

Bauddhacharya Shanti Swaroop Bauddh

the great lover of Ancient Indian progressive

heterogeneous wisdom.

Publisher's Note

Today an atheist is he who does not believe in the Vedas, the Bible, the Quran and such like other books and/or who does not believe in god and allied phenomena, but positively believes in Science, in Reason and in Humanism. Those who do not know the origins of the Indian philosophy and boast of the so-called spiritualism, cannot appreciate the role of Charvaka. They cannot imagine even the throes of the first Indian philosophers. It is, therefore, necessary for the students of philosophy to fully understand Charvaka and his role as the father of Indian philosophy.

Kant, one of the greatest philosophers of the West, recognised his debt to scepticism when he declared : The scepticism of Hume roused me from my dogmatic slumber. Materialism (Charvakas/ Lokayatas) is as old as philosophy, and the theory is to be met within the pre-Buddhistic period also. Germs of it are found in the hymns of the Rig-Veda.

Materialism signifies the declaration of the spiritual independence of the individual and the rejection of the principle of authority. Nothing need be accepted by the individual which does not find its evidence in the movement of reason. The Cārvāka philosophy is a fanatical effort made to rid the age of the weight of the past that was oppressing it.

Even so late as the middle of the last century, the pursuit of Chemistry in England was not regarded in a serious light and 'chemists were ashamed to call themselves so because the apothecaries had appropriated the name–a circumstance which led Liebig in 1837 to declare that England was not the land of science.

The reason for this is quite clear. The Charvakas knew no compromise–neither in sociology nor in philosophy–howsoever sinister might have been the threats of the lawmakers against any tendency of transgressing the scriptures.

We hope readers will find this book on the world Atheism useful.

–Sundeep Bauddh

Preface

This volume is a sequel to my previous book on the subject. In addition to elucidating the various concepts of atheism found in different Indian Darshanas and their commentaries, two chapters–one on the Western atheism and the other on the Middle-eastern Atheism–shed light on atheism in Europe and Asia. Russian Atheism has also been discussed in a separate chapter. Thus there are glimpses of the world of Atheis. This book is unique in the sense that it contains Eastern and Western concepts of Atheism.

I am thankful to Mr. Sandeep Baudh and Mr. Kapil Swaroop Baudh–the able sons of an able father–for bringing out this volume without delay.

I am indebted to my wife Madam Soma Sablok for helping me in various forms to complete the book. My son Manav Ajnat sent me some important books from abroad to enable me to write on Western Atheism. I also thank Manav Ajnat-Anju Bala and Abhinav Ajnat-Rohina Ratti. I record my love for my grand daughters–Priyanka Ajnat, Sneha Ajnat and Apoorva Ajnat.

The views expressed in the book are mine and none of the afore-said is responsible for them.

07 Feb., 2021

–Surendra Ajnat

* असतः सदजायत (ऋ.वे. 10-72-2)
(From the inanimate came into being the animate.)

* तर्कमृषिं प्रायच्छन् (निरुक्तम् 13/11)
(Gave them Tark (Reasoning) as Rishi (guide))

* बहूनां प्राणिनामनुग्रहार्थं चार्वाकमतमाश्रयणीयम् (सर्वदर्शनसंग्रहः)
(For the favour of Bahujan one must take refuge in the Charvaka philosophy)

* Buddhism is nothing if not Rationalism-Babasaheb Ambedkar.

* **Nullius in Verba** (Don't take anyone's word, verify all statements by an appeal to facts only.)

* Charwak is... an... independent thinker of the past ages. He challenged the authority of God in the old times.

—(Saheed) Bhagat Singh

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Who is Charvaka?

In the Rig Veda (10/72) there is a rishi namely Laukya Brihaspati i.e. Brihaspati, the son of Loka. As this Brihaspati was son of Loka so his philosophy came to be known as Laukyayata which later became Lokayata. He says

असतः सदजायत (R.V. 10-72-2)
(From the inanimate came into being, the animate)

He says that as all the ingredients of liquor are devoid of intoxication; but when all ingredients are mixed in a particular proportion, then intoxication comes into being. Likewise, when the Bhootas (Tattvas) earth, water, air and fire mix in a particular proportion then consciousness comes into being. That is the way of the inanimate (Asat), becoming animate (Sat).

चार्वाक from चार्वी

Kashika, a commentary on Panini's Ashtadhyayi, written in the 7th century A.D. tells us that the word charvi (चार्वी) means reason (बुद्धि). It says that Charvi is also the teacher who teaches Lokayata Shastra. That Charvi teaches the topics of Lokayata Shastra, establishes the Lokayata Shastra.[1]

From this Charvi, the teacher of Lokayata Shastra, the word Charvaka came into being which means a rationalist, an Acharya of Lokayata Shastra–'Charvik', which became Charvaka after sometime.

Chavri became Charvika with 'Ka' suffix denoting subject, doer, when people could not understand that Charvi is already a noun, a subject or a doer. It sometimes happens. There is one word Goyuk (गोयुक्), it originally meant 'a couple of cows'; later when people forgot the practice then slowly it became a suffix in the sense of only 'a

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1. *नयते चार्वी लोकायते. चार्वी बुद्धिः, तत्सम्बन्धादाचार्योऽपि चार्वी, स लोकायते शास्त्रे पदार्थान्नयते, उपपत्तिभिः स्थिरीकृत्य शिष्येभ्यः प्रापयति, ते युक्तिभिः स्थाप्यमानाः सम्मानिताः पूजिता भवन्ति.*
(Ashtadhyayi, 1-3-36, see Kashika on it)

couple'. Then they started using Go-Goyuk (गो-गोयुक्) (a couple of cows). Likewise 'Ka' suffix was added to the word Charvi, making it Charvika. They took Charvi for reason and added 'Ka' suffix making it mean a Rationalist. They forgot the extention of the meaning of word Charvi, i.e. teacher. Later on, they thought 'Vika' might he wrong here, as it means nothing. Here 'Vaka' should be proper as 'Vak' means 'language' or speech. Then Charvika became Chārvāka.

Then they started showing the meaning in this way–'Charu' (good); Vak (language, speech) etc. whereas originally it started from 'Charvi' (a teacher of Lokayata Shastra).

Prof. Max Muller says—There are some tenets of the followers of Brihaspati which seem to indicate the existence of other schools of philosophy by their side. The Barhaspatyas speak as if being inter pares,[1] they differ from others as others differed from them. Traces of an opposition against the religion of the Vedas (Kautsa) appear in the hymns, the Brahmanas, and the Sutras, and to ignore them would give us an entirely false idea of the religious and philosophical battles and battle-fields of ancient India. As viewed from a Brahmanic point of view, and we have no other, the opposition represented by Brihaspati and others may seem insignificant, but the very name given to these heretics would seem to imply that their doctrines had met with a worldwide acceptance (Lokāyatikas). Another name, that of Nāstika, is given to them as saying no to everything except the evidence of the senses, particularly to the evidence of the Vedas, which, curiously enough, was called by the Vedantists Pratyaksha, that is, self-evident, like sense-perception.[2]

Who is an Atheist?

When it is asked : who is an atheist, generally people including those who have knowledge of Hindu scriptures and that of the Sanskrit language, say that a person who finds fault with or decries the Vedas, is an atheist. To substantiate it they quote : नास्तिको वेदनिन्दकः.

This is wrong. The quoted line is from the Manu Smriti. But the full verse does not say that a decrier of the Vedas is a Nastika. On the contrary, it says—He is a Nastika and a decrier of the Vedas. (Manu 2/11).

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1. *first among equals.*
2. *Max Muller, The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy, Page 98*

The full verse runs thus :

योऽवमन्येत ते मूले हेतुशास्त्राश्रयाद् द्विजः,
स साधुभिर्बहिष्कार्यो नास्तिको वेदनिन्दकः. (2/11)

One who disrespects the two (Veda & Smriti) by his arguments, good people should boycott him, he is a Nastika and a decrier of the Vedas.

It means, he does not become a Nastika by doing so, but he is already a Nastika and he now decries the Vedas. That being so, the question remains as it was before : Who is a Nastika?

The words Aastika and Nastika have been defined by Panini in his *Ashtadhyayi* as under :

अस्ति नास्ति दिष्टं मतिः (4-4-60)

It means he who believes in Disht i.e. hereafter, the next world, is an Aastika and he who does not believe in the dishta (the next world) is a Nastika.

The so-called next world is independent of the Vedas and of god. There are those who believe in the next world but do not believe in the Vedas, like the Jains.

Likewise, the Jains believe in the next world but do not believe in god. The Mimansa school of Indian philosophy also does not believe in god but believes in the next world. The Buddhists too do not believe in the Vedas and god, but believe in the next world. So originally the word Nastika had nothing to do with Vedas and god. The much quoted line of the Manu Smriti too endorses the same. It does not say that the decrier of the Vedas is a Nastika.

It was in the subsequent centuries that the meaning of the word Nastika underwent change. As a result, it abondoned its original meaning and a new meaning got evolved—one who does not believe in god and/or in scriptures.—the Vedas and allied books. Today an atheist is he who does not believe in the Vedas, the Bible, the Quran and such like other books and/or who does not believe in god and allied phenomena, but positively believes in Science, in Reason and in Humanism.

Charvaka : The Father of Indian Philosophy

Those who do not know the origins of the Indian philosophy and boast of the so-called spiritualism, cannot appreciate the role of Charvaka. They cannot imagine even the throes of the first Indian philosophers. It is, therefore, necessary for the students of philosophy to fully understand Charvaka and his role as the father of Indian philosophy. It is useful for a student of philosophy to remember as well what Indian philosophy owes to the Charvaka. Scepticism or agnosticism is only the expression of a free mind that refuses to accept traditional wisdom without a thorough criticism. Philosophy, as critical speculation, claims to live chiefly on free thought and the more it can satisfy the sceptic, the sounder can it hope to be. By questioning the soundness of popular notions, the sceptic sets new problems, by the solution of which philosophy becomes richer.

Kant, one of the greatest philosophers of the West, recognised his debt to scepticism when he declared : 'The scepticism of Hume roused me from my dogmatic slumber'. "And we may say", say the authors of *An introduction to Indian Philosophy*, "that the *Cārvāka* similarly saved Indian Philosophy from dogmatism to a great extent... every system of Indian thought tried to meet the Cārvāka objections and made the Cārvāka a touchstone of its theories. The value of the Cārvāk philosophy, therefore, lies directly in supplying fresh philosophical problems and indirectly in compelling other thinkers to give up dogmatism, and become critical and cautious in speculation as well as in the statement of views."[1]

'Thought and Consciousness', says Engels, 'are products of the human brain.' Commenting on this George Thomson says, 'The truth of this is so plain that it might almost seem to be obvious, yet philosophers have piled tome upon tome in order to deny, distort or

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1. *Satishchandra Chatterjee and Dhirendramohan Datta, An Introduction to Indian Philosophy, pp. 63-64*

obscure it.' Thus, a large section of the contemporary philosophers, 'while claiming to be specialists in the study of thought, continue their disputations without regard to what scientists have learnt about the actual mechanism of the human brain."[1]

In Indian philosophy, the Nyāya-Vaiséṣikas, with their serious preocupation with the problems of epistemology, argued that material body was indispensable for consciousness, yet they could not outgrow the age-old superstition about soul and its liberation. Knowledge, feeling and volition were conceived as states of an embodied soul and in liberation, the soul becoming disembodied, was devoid of consciousness. It was but one step further to establish epistemology on a secure scientific basis and assert that it was plain nonsense to talk of a soul apart from the body and that the conception of liberation was at best a deception. This step was actually taken by our Lokāyatas or the Cārvākas, i.e. the ancient materialists.[2]

In the Buddhist Piṭakas, not only the name Lokāyata, another name for Chārvākas, is found but also distinct references to the view that identified the body with the self. Arthashastra also mentions the Lokāyatas along with the Samkhya and Yoga. The Mahabharata and the earliest Jain sources, too, mentioned this philosophy. The Upanishads are also aware of this philosophy.

"The materialist tradition in India is very old–probably as old as Indian philosophy itself."[3]

"Materialism (Charvakas/Lokayatas) is as old as philosophy, and the theory is to be met within the pre-Buddhistic period also. Germs of it are found in the hymns of the Rig-Veda".[4]

Materialism signifies the declaration of the spiritual independence of the individual and the rejection of the principle of authority. Nothing need be accepted by the individual which does not find its evidence in the movement of reason. It is a return of man's spirit to itself and a rejection of all that is merely external and foriegn. The Cārvāka

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1. *George Thomson, Studies in Ancient Greek Society, ii, 302*
2. *Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya, Indian Philosophy, p. 184*
3. *Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya, Op. cit., p. 185*
4. *S. Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy, Vol. 1, p. 228).*

philosophy is a fanatical effort made to rid the age of the weight of the past that was oppressing it. The removal of dogmatism which it helped to effect was necessary to make room for the great constructive efforts of speculation.[1]

When people begin to reflect with freedom from pre-suppositions and religious superstition they easily tend to materialist belief... Materialism is the first answer to the question of how far our unassisted reason helps us in the difficulties of philosophy.[2]

1. *Ibid, p. 234*
2. *Ibid, p. 235*

Fall of Charvakas : Fall of Science

The Charvakas uphold the primacy of preception. That is very important because natural science draws its main nourishment ultimately from direct sense-perception. It is sad to note that in India eventually developed a situation in which the defence of scriptural knowledge, of idealism of Upanishads and of Advaita Vedanta, acquired so much of importance that the direct sense-perception was looked down upon, was considered wholly irrelevant or philosophically an aberration. That was the death knell for the growth of Science in this country.

P.C. Ray, the father of Indian chemistry, in his *History of Hindu Chemistry* discusses this topic in a special but small chapter. I quote some of the paragraphs from the same to clear this point further.

He says, "The drift of Manu and of the later Purāṇas is in the direction of glorifying the priestly class, which set up most arrogant and outrageous pretensions. According to Sushruta, the dissection of dead bodies is a *sine qua non* to the student of surgery and this high authority lays particular stress on knowledge gained from experiment and observation. But Manu would have none of it. The very touch of a corpse, according to Manu, is enough to bring contamination to the sacred person of Brahmin. Thus, we find that shortly after the time of Vāgbhata, the handling of a lancet was discouraged and Anatomy and Surgery fell into disuse and became to all intents and purposes lost science to the Hindus. It was considered equally undignified to sweat away at the forge like a Cyclops. Hence, the cultivation of the Kalās by the more refined classes of the society of which we get such vivid pictures in the ancient Sanskrit literature has survived only in traditions since a very long time past.

"The arts being relegated to the low castes and the professions made hereditary, a certain degree of fineness, delicacy and deftness in manipulation was no doubt secured by this, was done at a terrible cost. The intellectual portion of the community being thus withdrawn from active participation in the arts, the how and why of phenomena–the

coordination of cause and effect–were lost sight of–the spirit of enquiry gradually died out among a nation naturally prone to speculation and metaphysical subtleties and India fc once bade adieu to experimental and inductive sciences. Her soil was rendered morally unfit for the birth of a Boyle, a Des Cartes or a Newton and her very name was all but expunged from the map of the scientific world. In this land of intellectual torpor and stagnation the artisan c' :sses, left very much to themselves and guided solely by their mother wit and sound commonsense, which is their only heritage in this world, have kept up the old traditions. In their own way they display marvellous skill in damescening, making ornamental designs on metals, carving on ivory, enamelling, weaving, dyeing, lace-making, goldsmitn's and jeweller's works, etc."

Priestly class is a universal curse. Therefore, even in Greece when this class was dominant, science suffered a lot. The so-called great philosophers of Greece were no better than our Manu. But what makes difference is the people. The people of those countries proved better than the Indians because they fought from time to time. That changed the course of history of science there. Says P.C. Ray :

"Similar dangers have threatened Europe from time to time but her sturdy sons have proved better of them in the long run. Thus 'Aristotle's opinion that industrial work tends to lower the standard of thought was certainly of influence here. In accordance with this dictum, the educated Greeks held aloof from the observation and practice of technical chemical processes; a theoretical explanation of the reactions involved in these lay outside their circle of interest.

"Paracelsus flings a sneer at the physicians of his time and compares them with the alchemists in the following terms : 'For they are not given to idleness nor go in a proud habit, or plush and velvet garments, often showing their rings upon their fingers or wearing swords with silver hilts by their sides, or fine and gay gloves upon their hands, but diligently follow their labours, sweating whole days and nights by their furnaces. They do not spend their time abroad for recreations but take delight in their laboratory. They wear leather garments with a pouch, and an apron wherewith they wipe their hands. They put their fingers amc ngst coals, into clay, and filth, not into gold rings. They are sooty and black like smith and colliers, and do not pride themselves upon clean and beautiful faces.

"Even so late as the middle of the last century, the pursuit of Chemistry in England was not regarded in a serious light and 'chemists were ashamed to call themselves so because the apothecaries had appropriated the name'–a circumstance which led Liebig in 1837 to declare that England was not the land of science."

In Ray's judgement Shankara too stood accused for the decline of science in India, where the later is considered an incarnation of god. Ray observed :

"The Vedānta philosophy, as modified and expanded by Śaṃkara, which teaches the unreality of the material world, is also to a large extent responsible for bringing the study of physical science into disrepute. Śaṃkara is unsparing in his strictures on Kaṇāda and his system.

"One or two extracts from Śaṃkara's Commentary on the Vedānta Sūtras, will make the point clear : (Observed Śaṃkara) It thus appears that the atomic doctrine is supported by very weak arguments only, is opposed to those scriptural passages which declare the Lord to be the general cause, and is not accepted by any of the authorities taking their stand on scripture, such as Manu and others. Hence, it is to be altogether disregarded by highminded men who have a regard for their own spiritual welfare.[1] (Again :) "The reasons on account of which the doctrine of the Vaiśeṣikas cannot be accepted have been stated above. That doctrine may be called semi-destructive (or semi-nihilistic)."[2]

To this Ray added :

"Among a people ridden by caste and hide-bound by the authorities and injunctions of the Vedas, Purāṇas and Smritis and having their intellect thus cramped and paralysed, no Boyle could arise to lay down such sound principles for guidance as : '...I saw that several chemists had, by a laudable diligence obtained various productions, hit upon many more phenomena, considerable in their kind, than could well be expected from their narrow. principles: but finding the generality of those addicted to chemistry, to have had scarce any view, but to the preparation of medicines, or, to the improving of metals, I was tempted to consider the art, not as a physician or an alchemist, but a philosopher.

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1. *तदेवमसारतरतर्कसन्दृब्धत्वादीश्वरकारणश्रुतिविरुद्धत्वाच्छुतिप्रवणैश्चशिष्टैर्मन्वादिभिरपरिग्रहीतत्वादत्यन्तमेवानपेक्षाऽस्मिन्परमाणुकारणवादे कार्या आर्यैः श्रेयोर्थिभिरिति वाक्यशेषः (ब्रह्मसूत्रभाष्यम्)*
2. *वैशेषिकराद्धान्तो दुर्भुक्तियोगाद्वेदविरोधाच्छिष्टापरिग्रहाच्च नापेक्षितव्य इत्युक्तम्. (ब्रह्मसूत्रभाष्यम्)*

And, with this view, I once drew up a scheme for a chemical philosophy; which I should be glad that any experiments or observations of mine might any way contribute to complete.

" '...And, truly, if men were willing to regard the advancement of philosophy; more than their own reputations, it were easy to make them sensible, that one of the most considerable services they could do the world is, to set themselves diligently to make experiments and collect observations, without attempting to establish theories upon them, before they have taken notice of all the phenomena that are to be solved'."

P.C. Ray here refers to Shankara's polemics against the atomic hypothesis of Kanada. This is not irrelevant and cannot but be reminiscent of the ancient Greek situation in which the great idealist philosopher Plato wanted the atomism of Democritus to be banned as well as to put out the lamp of natural science first lighted by the early Ionians. This Plato also wanted people to believe that the basic controversy between idealism (Indian Vedanta) and materialism (Indian Charvaka) was a form of struggle going on between the gods and devils–the devils defending materialism, of course.

We have quoted P.C. Ray extentively simply to emphasise the point that the great boost received by extreme world-denying idealism–which it could receive only by trying to suppress the materialist trend–was the most important ideological factor for the wreck of natural science and scientific temper in our cultural history. As an example of the materialist trend against which there was a vertiable crusade of the idealists he has mentioned the atomism of the Vaisheshikas, of Kanada.

The reason for this is quite clear. The Charvakas knew no compromise–neither in sociology nor in philosophy–howsoever sinister might have been the threats of the law–makers against any tendency of transgressing the scriptures. They had the potentiality of nourishing natural science. The suppression of them proved disastrous for the development of science in India.

It is an undeniable fact that natural science did draw on materialism for the essential theoretical basis, because there is the primacy of perception and the validity of inference only in so far as it follows the lead of direct sense–perception in it.

Fall of Charvakas : Fall of Science

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"The arts being relegated to the low castes and the professions made hereditary, a certain degree of fineness, delicacy and deftness in manipulation was no doubt secured by this, was done at a terrible cost. The intellectual portion of the community being thus withdrawn from active participation in the arts, the how and why of phenomena–the

coordination of cause and effect–were lost sight of–the spirit of enquiry gradually died out among a nation naturally prone to speculation and metaphysical subtleties and India fc once bade adieu to experimental and inductive sciences. Her soil was rendered morally unfit for the birth of a Boyle, a Des Cartes or a Newton and her very name was all but expunged from the map of the scientific world. In this land of intellectual torpor and stagnation the artisan c' :sses, left very much to themselves and guided solely by their mother wit and sound commonsense, which is their only heritage in this world, have kept up the old traditions. In their own way they display marvellous skill in damescening, making ornamental designs on metals, carving on ivory, enamelling, weaving, dyeing, lace-making, goldsmitn's and jeweller's works, etc."

Priestly class is a universal curse. Therefore, even in Greece when this class was dominant, science suffered a lot. The so-called great philosophers of Greece were no better than our Manu. But what makes difference is the people. The people of those countries proved better than the Indians because they fought from time to time. That changed the course of history of science there. Says P.C. Ray :

"Similar dangers have threatened Europe from time to time but her sturdy sons have proved better of them in the long run. Thus 'Aristotle's opinion that industrial work tends to lower the standard of thought was certainly of influence here. In accordance with this dictum, the educated Greeks held aloof from the observation and practice of technical chemical processes; a theoretical explanation of the reactions involved in these lay outside their circle of interest.

"Paracelsus flings a sneer at the physicians of his time and compares them with the alchemists in the following terms : 'For they are not given to idleness nor go in a proud habit, or plush and velvet garments, often showing their rings upon their fingers or wearing swords with silver hilts by their sides, or fine and gay gloves upon their hands, but diligently follow their labours, sweating whole days and nights by their furnaces. They do not spend their time abroad for recreations but take delight in their laboratory. They wear leather garments with a pouch, and an apron wherewith they wipe their hands. They put their fingers amc ngst coals, into clay, and filth, not into gold rings. They are sooty and black like smith and colliers, and do not pride themselves upon clean and beautiful faces.

"Even so late as the middle of the last century, the pursuit of Chemistry in England was not regarded in a serious light and 'chemists were ashamed to call themselves so because the apothecaries had appropriated the name'–a circumstance which led Liebig in 1837 to declare that England was not the land of science."

In Ray's judgement Shankara too stood accused for the decline of science in India, where the later is considered an incarnation of god. Ray observed :

"The Vedānta philosophy, as modified and expanded by Śaṃkara, which teaches the unreality of the material world, is also to a large extent responsible for bringing the study of physical science into disrepute. Śaṃkara is unsparing in his strictures on Kaṇāda and his system.

"One or two extracts from Śaṃkara's Commentary on the Vedānta Sūtras, will make the point clear : (Observed Śaṃkara) It thus appears that the atomic doctrine is supported by very weak arguments only, is opposed to those scriptural passages which declare the Lord to be the general cause, and is not accepted by any of the authorities taking their stand on scripture, such as Manu and others. Hence, it is to be altogether disregarded by highminded men who have a regard for their own spiritual welfare.[1] (Again :) "The reasons on account of which the doctrine of the Vaiśeṣikas cannot be accepted have been stated above. That doctrine may be called semi-destructive (or semi-nihilistic)."[2]

To this Ray added :

"Among a people ridden by caste and hide-bound by the authorities and injunctions of the Vedas, Purāṇas and Smritis and having their intellect thus cramped and paralysed, no Boyle could arise to lay down such sound principles for guidance as : '...I saw that several chemists had, by a laudable diligence obtained various productions, hit upon many more phenomena, considerable in their kind, than could well be expected from their narrow. principles: but finding the generality of those addicted to chemistry, to have had scarce any view, but to the preparation of medicines, or, to the improving of metals, I was tempted to consider the art, not as a physician or an alchemist, but a philosopher.

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1. *तदेवमसारतरतर्कसन्दृब्धत्वादीश्वरकारणश्रुतिविरुद्धत्वाच्छुतिप्रवणैश्चशिष्टैर्मन्वादिभिरपरिग्रहीतत्वादत्यन्तमेवानपेक्षाऽस्मिन्परमाणुकारणवादे कार्या आर्यैः श्रेयोर्थिभिरिति वाक्यशेषः (ब्रह्मसूत्रभाष्यम्)*
2. *वैशेषिकराद्धान्तो दुर्भुक्तियोगाद्वेदविरोधाच्छिष्टापरिग्रहाच्च नापेक्षितव्य इत्युक्तम्. (ब्रह्मसूत्रभाष्यम्)*

And, with this view, I once drew up a scheme for a chemical philosophy; which I should be glad that any experiments or observations of mine might any way contribute to complete.

" '...And, truly, if men were willing to regard the advancement of philosophy; more than their own reputations, it were easy to make them sensible, that one of the most considerable services they could do the world is, to set themselves diligently to make experiments and collect observations, without attempting to establish theories upon them, before they have taken notice of all the phenomena that are to be solved'."

P.C. Ray here refers to Shankara's polemics against the atomic hypothesis of Kanada. This is not irrelevant and cannot but be reminiscent of the ancient Greek situation in which the great idealist philosopher Plato wanted the atomism of Democritus to be banned as well as to put out the lamp of natural science first lighted by the early Ionians. This Plato also wanted people to believe that the basic controversy between idealism (Indian Vedanta) and materialism (Indian Charvaka) was a form of struggle going on between the gods and devils–the devils defending materialism, of course.

We have quoted P.C. Ray extentively simply to emphasise the point that the great boost received by extreme world-denying idealism–which it could receive only by trying to suppress the materialist trend–was the most important ideological factor for the wreck of natural science and scientific temper in our cultural history. As an example of the materialist trend against which there was a vertiable crusade of the idealists he has mentioned the atomism of the Vaisheshikas, of Kanada.

The reason for this is quite clear. The Charvakas knew no compromise–neither in sociology nor in philosophy–howsoever sinister might have been the threats of the law–makers against any tendency of transgressing the scriptures. They had the potentiality of nourishing natural science. The suppression of them proved disastrous for the development of science in India.

It is an undeniable fact that natural science did draw on materialism for the essential theoretical basis, because there is the primacy of perception and the validity of inference only in so far as it follows the lead of direct sense–perception in it.

Secondly, practice is the criterion of truth here. This principle was essential for medical science, as is evidenced by the repeated assertions of it in the Charaka-Samhita.

Such epistemological points apart, the Charvakas put emphasis on certain general positions that are essential for natural science.

One of these is Svabhava-Vad (the laws of nature). From the view point of social science in particular, the view of Svabhava-Vada had the revolutionary significance of scrapping altogether the assumption of destiny (अदृष्ट) and karma which are the basic theoretical planks of caste-based society.

The opponents said : If you do not admit Adrishta (i.e. the unseen results of past action or karma in the form of virtue or vice), the infinite variety of phenomena in the world would have to be accepted as just fortuitous–

नन्वदृष्टानिष्टौ जगद्वैचित्र्यमाकस्मिकं स्यादिति चेत्.

To this the Charvakas answer : न तद् भद्रम्. स्वभावादेव तदुपपत्तेः. तदुक्तम्–

अग्निरुष्णो जलं शीतं समस्पर्शस्तथानिलः,
केनेदं चित्रितं तस्मात्स्वभावात्तद्व्यवस्थितिः. *(सर्वदर्शनसंग्रह)*

i.e. however, this is not rightly said (i.e. is hardly an objection with any merit), in as much as it (the variety in the world) is adequately explained by Svabhava. As is said :

'The fire is hot, the water cold and air is neutral to touch (i.e. neither hot nor cold).

By whom are all these created? (Evidently by none).

All these are so because of Svabhava.'

It goes without saying that the concept of Svabhava is found to occur as one of the alternatives to god–the monotheistic view.

But from the sociological viewpoint, there was in the Indian philosophy another concept that was something like super-god. This was karma or the law of karma. The god of monotheism is supposed to be all-merciful. Prayers and propitiations to him are supposed to have the efficacy to rouse his mercy; but the law of karma is, by contrast, supposed to be so inordinate and omnipotent that even the god can at best be a helpless witness to its operation.

A considerable number of Indian philosophers tried to explain the infinite variety of the material world by this law of Karma. The social implications of the law of karma and its corollary called Adrishta (the unseen/destiny) effect in the form of virtue and vice propelling men through the cycles of birth and rebirth. The main thrust of the view of Savabhava is against this concept of karma and Adrishta. "In the Indian context," say Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya, "therefore, the materialists with their theory of Savbhava had a far more revolutionary role to play than a simple atheist denying god."

Apart from this sociological implication, it was also a pointer to the fundamentals of classical science, because it insisted that every phenomenon in nature must have a natural cause. This may be contrasted with the pure accidentalism (यदृच्छावाद). Though both deny any supernatural agency accounting for the phenomena of nature, yet one was scientific while the other was anti-science. From the view point of Yadrichchha-vad (pure accidentalism) supernatural agency was denied because there was no law of nature at all and hence any divine will as governing nature was an undue assumption, whereas from the viewpoint of science, supernatural agency was denied in defence of the view that everything in nature was governed by natural laws (Svabhava-Vada).

It goes without saying that denying any divine will as governing nature, the view of Svabhava remained a pointer to the course of the development of science, for it emphasised the fact that every natural event was determined by some law inherent in nature itself.

Prof. Hiriyanna says, "what needs to be noticed about it first is its positivistic character which is implied by the contrast that is sometimes drawn between it and the Adrishta-Vada or 'belief in the supernatural'. In this it differs from the supernaturalism of the Mantras and Brahmanas on the one hand, and, on the other from the metaphysical view of the Upanishads."[1]

It may be noted here that while denying the effectuating power of a nimitta-karana (efficient cause), and conceiving matter as moved into action of its own nature (Parinama-Svabhava), the Sankhya too approaches the position of a Svabhava-Vadin–says Gopinath Kaviraj.

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1. *M. Hiriyanna, Outlines of Indian Philosophy, p. 104*

Explainning Nyava-Sutra (4-1-22), where the doctrine of Svabhava was evidently referred to, Ruben underlines the closeness of the doctrine with the standpoint not only of the Charvakas, but also of the Sankhya–both of which denied god. "The Sankhya," says Ruben, "was fond of the example of milk which in the mother flowed spontaneously–i.e. without any effort of an intelligent original cause in the form of god."

The concept of Svabhava emphasised on a two-fold implication : firstly, to scrap the view of any supernatural agency accounting for the observed multiplicity and to reject the theory of Karma and Adrishta–'the main theoretical plank of the political philosophy of the exploitative society'. "Since our materialists–and the materialists alone–showed the courage of directly rejecting all this, it is impossible to deny them a revolutionary role specially in the Indian context," says Prof. Chattopadhyaya. He further says, "Besides, this was also a pointer to the development of natural science, the historical significance of which can be judged specially when we remember that it took a long time to secularise the concept of the laws of nature in the history of science in Europe. Even a scientist as great as Newton proposed to view the Laws of Nature as but expressions of the will of god, while for our ancient materialists Svabhava was nothing if not essentially secular."

Secondly, it was an outright rejection of the view of Yadrichchha-Vad a (pure accidentalism). This supplemented the first implication.

Every phenomenon in nature, according to Svabhava-Vada, was determined by some definite natural cause and this has been a fundamental postulate of natural science at least in its classical sense–though in contemporary science the concept of causality is tending to become more complex and sophisticated, which is but natural, as we have reached 21 century.

Life and body

Life is neither eternal nor does it come into being from something living. Natural sciences show how living nature arose out of non-living, inorganic nature.

Scientists say that the primary gas-dust matter from which our Earth[1] was formed some 4600 million years ago, contained the simplest compounds of carbon and hydrogen (hydrocarbons) from which the more complex organic compounds were subsequently formed. Entering into chemical associations with each other, the organic compounds became more and more complex until amino acids, the basic elements of the protein molecules, were formed. As organic substances became more differentiated and complex, their reflective ability became more diverse and intricate.

Hundreds of millions of years later the molecules of this primary chemical protein, formed amino acids, had turned into a living protein body and thereby acquired the property of **metabolism, which is the basic feature** of everything living. Landing in a favourable environment and entering into a metabolic interchange with it, this protein body became an organism.

Metabolism is absorption of nutritive substances from the environment and their conversion into the living cells and tissues of an organism and disintegration of this living tissue. This process is inherent only in living protein, in an organism. Only by assimilating nutritive substances and excreting the products of their disintegration, can an

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1. *The earth is made up of more than 100 different elements, The following 8 Elements constitute the important ones :*

Oxygen	–	*46.5%*
Silicon	–	*27.72%*
Aluminium	–	*8.13%*
Iron	–	*5.01%*
Calcium	–	*3.63%*
Sodium	–	*2.85%*
Potassium	–	*2.62%*
Magnesium	–	*2.09%*
other elements	–	*1.41%*

organism live and develop. "Life is the mode of existence of protein bodies, the essential element of which consists in continual metabolic exchange with the natural environment outside them, and which ceases with the cessation of this metabolism," says Engels.[1]

Take a corpse. It looks like a body, but actually it is not so, because body (living body) is that in which metabolic exchange takes place. When that does not take place, it becomes a corpse. The process of metabolism is life, when that process stops, life is no more there. No soul comes in the body when one takes birth and no soul goes out of the body, when one dies.

Consciousness is the product of nature, a property of matter, though not of all of it, but only of highly organised matter, the human brain. Drawing on numerous experimental data, Pavlov concluded that, "psychical activity is the result of the physiological activity of a certain mass of the brain."

But brain by itself is incapable of thinking, because consciousness is inseparably bound up with man's material environment. It cannot function without the influence of this environment. Visual, auditory, olfactory and other sensations arise in the brain only under the influence of objectively existing objects with their intrinsic colours, smells, sounds and other properties.

These objects and their properties act on the sense organs and the resultant irritation is transmitted along the nerve channels to the cortex of the cerebral hemispheres where the respective sensations arise. Sensations create perceptions, ideas and also concepts and other forms of thought. All of them represent only images, more or less exact reflections of objectively existing objects and phenomena. Outside of them, these images cannot arise in man's consciousness.

Not only images of existing objects and phenomena arise in man's consciousness, but also images of things which are yet to come into existence, because man can create images of future buildings, machines and many other artificial things, and also images of future social order, etc.

But these images arise on the basis of reflection of what already exists, on the basis of the knowledge of the surrounding objective reality, its potentialities and trends of development.

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1. *Frederick Engels, Dialectics of Nature, p. 301*

Thought is inseparable from matter, from brains, but it must not be identified with matter, because thought is not a thing; it cannot be seen or photographed; it is the image of objects & phenomena existing in the world; it is an ideal and not a material image. It is aptly said that the ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind, and translated into forms of thought.

Reality, acting on man, always passes through the prism of the laws governing thought, such as analysis and synthesis, generalisation, etc. What sets him apart from animals is his ability to think i.e. to actively reflect reality, to influence it, to set himself certain aims and work for their achievement. The very sensations of man radically differ from those of animals. The eyes of an eagle, for example, see much farther than those of man, but man has immeasurably greater insight than the eagle into what is seen.

x x x

All living things on earth–plants, animals and human beings–are made up of cells. Our entire body–bones, muscles, skin, blood, hair and nerves–contain more than 10^{12} (10,000,000,000,000) cells. Each part of the body is made up of its own kind of cells and each kind performs a special function.

The cell may be oval, spherical, flat, elongated or cylindrical in shape. Every cell is surrounded by a soft and elastic membrane called Plasma Membrane. It plays an important role in regulating the passage of some substances through it. The cell membrane is filled with a semitransparent, jelly-like fluid called protoplasm. Protoplasm consists of nucleus, ribosomes, mitochondria, golgi bodies and centrosomes, etc. which perform various functions in the body. It is a complicated chemical substance which carries on all the processes necessary for life. Now man has created artificial cell, artificial life.

It takes in food and oxygen, changes some of the food into living matter, gives off waste, repairs its worn-out parts and reproduces itself.

The largest cells are the nerve cells that may be about a metre long but very thin and the smallest cells are the red blood cells, which are less than the thousandth of a centimetre across. The red blood cells are so tiny that **5000,000** of them would fit inside a drop of blood of the size of the letter 'a'. Some cells are so tiny that even the most modern

microscope, which magnifies **200000** times and can enlarge an ant to a length of 3/4 of a km., cannot show details of these cells.

It is clear that the cells are a material thing and there is nothing spiritual in them–no soul, etc. These cells combine together to form different tissues which in turn make different organs of the body.

Human body gets its energy from the food we eat. About one quarter of the food is consumed for different activities like work, play and general movements. Another one quarter goes to sustain life, to maintain the body temperature, build and repair body tissues and for general functioning of internal organs. The remaining half is excreted and returns to the soil and the atmosphere.

A human being uses only about one half of the food he consumes. Thus, in mechanical terminology, his efficiency is only 50%.

A chemical analysis of a man weighing 68 kg. provided the following break-up of his body compositions :

Oxygen (44.23 kg), Carbon (12.25 kg), hydrogen (6.8 kg), nitrogen (2.04 kg), calcium (1.09 kg), phosphorus (680 gm), sodium (204 gm), chlorine (204 gm), sulphur (170.1 gm), magnesium (34 gm), iron (2.7 gm), and other mineral elements (337.5 gm).

All these elements combine together to form the body cells and the tissues.

The trace elements i.e. occurring in minute amounts are : manganese, copper, iodine, zinc, cobalt, chromium and fluorine. (337.5 gm).

There is nothing like soul in the body. Carbon and hydrogen combine to create carbohydrates, sugars and fats in the body. Hydrogen, nitrogen, carbon and oxygen remain in the form of proteins. Calcium and Phosphorus are the essential parts of the bones. Iron is the main component of the red cells. Sodium and Chlorine are present as salts in the body.

This is how the varied elements from different compounds are needed for proper functioning of the body-machine. There is nothing soul-like in the body. It is made up of matter and into matter it goes when it is disintegrated. It is clear from the above description that Man is nothing but matter temorarily organised in a particular form.

Self

The Self is an 'acting and thinking body'. The body is so built that it can be aware of its environment. What is it that sees? The body, of course. So my body that can see and think, is, infact the Self.

In other words, the body that becomes aware of itself as something different from other bodies (i.e. from the bodies that are external to it) thereby singles out from all other sensations, the sensation of its own particularity, its self-awareness, that which we designate for the sake of brevity by the personal pronoun 'I'.

For the human body eyes and ears are the main and widest windows on to the world. The sense of touch, taste and smell are only 'helpers'. People without sight and hearing would be not so much like animals as like plants. But since the history of their species has left them without hereditarily fixed active-biological forms of behaviour, the deaf-blind are doomed to passive immobility. The so-called soul, said to be very powerful, can do nothing in such cases.

It may be noted here that even the 'vegetable existence' is not a very true comparison, because a plant grows into the earth, into the atmosphere–into the world. It demands life and finds it through the activitiy of its organs of breathing and feeding. But the person who is blind and deaf will eat only when he is fed by others. He does not know that the source of food is not in him, he does not look for it outside him, and any hunger that he may feel has no orientation. The soul, having its so-called spiritual powers, can not and does not do any help. So such creatures, who are not even vegetables, are doomed to rapid extinction.

The deaf-blind child may not even have a human posture until it is taught, it may not even be able to stand or sit like a human being, because it has not seen others who sit or stand, despite the presence of the so-called soul, said to be the store of knowledge!

The human newborn brain has, among other qualities, the capacity to learn languages, abstract thinking and moral judgement, but not to create them.

They say that if we do introspection, we can find soul in ourselves. Introspection in such cases turns out to be a quite simple and strictly logical manifestation of the vicious circle : what is to be investigated (soul) must at the same time emerge as the result of the investigation. We start without any basis, simply with an *a priori* conjecture, that there is soul and in the end we declare that there in soul, we have realized that, etc.The individual's 'inner world' is in fact the external world of spatially extensional objects detected by his organic 'feelers' (his sensory organs) moving over the physical exterior of the object; a world inwardly recorded precisely as the external world of his own life-activity; a world discovered and represented–placed before one–by one's own life-activity. And no other inner world–acting out of itself–exists.

What is mind? Mind is certainly not what happens inside me and to me under the influence of external stimuli, but without them as such. Without them, that is, without correlation at every instant of my life-activity with the objectively existing world, my 'inner world' cannot exist. *That which happens inside me but has no objective representation outside me is not the mind. It is physiology, biochemistry, anything you like, but not my inner mental world. My inner world is, above all, the world of culture in which I live and act,* it is the real existence of nature assimilated by man, every detail of which signifies for me that which it objectively represents. In other words, my inner world is, in fact, the being, the existence of which I am aware.[1]

x x x

Thinking is creating, and particularly creating values that are not inherent in nature itself, 'just as the joy of life in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony is not inherent in the physics of sound waves, and the luminous sadness of Levitan's landscapes is not intrinsically connected with the chemical substances used to paint the canvas.' In the words of Mikhailov, "The whole problem of consciousness, the heart of the riddle of the self, lies in understanding how in human activity the physical, the chemical and other natural being is transformed into the beautiful, the good, into honour, dignity, truth, and justice, which actually form the basis and aim of human life."[2]

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1. *F.T. Mikhailov, The Riddle of the Self, Moscow, pp. 141-42*
2. *F.T. Mikhailov, The Riddle of the Self, Moscow, p. 255*

Intellect is determined by the content of historically developing human culture and not the rapidity of the algorithmised computing of the possible answers to a preformulated problem.

The thing that thinks and thus conscious of the world is the body, our brain. But the thinking is not matter, not brain. On the contary, thinking is a function of the brain. A function cannot be the thing of which it is a function. Thought or consciousness is non-material in the sense that it is not matter itself; but the fact that consciousness is a property of matter, of the brain, just as weight is a property of stone does not make it non-material, that is solely independent of matter.

Thinking actually is physiology, because it actually is the thinking brain. But thought is not merely a physical property of the brain– essentially it is reflection. The brain by means of the sense organs reflects the external world. The phenomena of the external world leave their mark on our brain by rearranging the processes that take place in it. The brain has the ability to actively process information coming from outside. It can integrate and analyse the impressions made upon it by objects. And it is this ability that we call *thinking*. When we talk about what is reflected in the matter of the brain, we talk about the mental. But if we talk about how, in what way external influence is reflected, then we have to do with physiology, with matter. So the activity of the brain is dialectical unity of the physiological and the mental. The physiological (i.e. meterial), has the property of reflecting the objective world, while the reflection in itself is mental (ideal).

In other words, we define the activity of the brain as physiological when we study the functions of the matter of the brain, and as mental, when we study the images of objects generated in the process of this activity.

In this process soul does not matter–whether it is there or not. If it is there, then it is redundant. When we analyse, soul no where comes into picture. It means there in no soul as there is no function for it.

What is seeing? The rays proceeding from the object (for example a tree) fall on cornea. Then these rays going through the convex lens make inverted image of the object on retina. This inverted image through the optic nerve reaches the brain, where it straightens and the object is seen by us.

The nervous apparatus of perception turns the external quality of the object into specific physiological processes. It codifies the information

received through the sense organs. This is why, when a person looks at a tree, no matter how closely, we study the physiology of the brain at that moment, we discover nothing resembling a tree in the specifically physiological processes that we find there.

When someone observes a given object for a certain period of time, doing so he experiences the visual image. A certain neurophysiological process takes place in his cerebral cortex. This process is sparked off by the effect of the object on the organs of vision. A certain neurodynamic system is formed that brings about visual perception. i.e. it gives rise to a visual, subjective image. The neurodynamic system is a bearer or vehicle of information (not the information itself but only its vehicle) and it transforms the signal reaching the retina of the eye and presents this information in subjective form to the individual. The neurodynamic system is not an image but the code of the external object that is being reflected.

There is nothing like soul beneath the human skull except a completely material brain and the material processes taking place inside it. Nature does not leave any room at all for an 'audience' or 'onlooker' (Sakshi) that could see the world and understand what it has seen. But human beings do both these things.

But could man always ask himself–'How is it that I know? How is it that I know that I am; I know other people, know that we are people, and not bears or tears?' No, because such questions presuppose the ability to look at one's own activity from the side. Here am I, he is an object, and this is what it will be like when I do this or that with it. Only when 'I' and 'I shall do this or that'–are not the same thing, when the 'I', the self, the Ego, is able to treat its activity as a forthcoming process, which may be corrected, modified in accordance with a prepared plan of action, only then can the question arise of the nature of knowledge and of what human consciousness is.

It now seems to us so natural to be able to organise activity according to the aims that are generated in our consciousness. But at the dawn of history, people did not view their activity 'from the side'. Why? Because people knew how to act only insofar as they obeyed the ritual of their collective life, the mode of their intercourse and activity, reproduced by one generation after another, having arisen on the basis of the division of labour according to sex and age. The ritual was an inviolable standard, a set of rules of intercourse in obedience

to which people played the roles assigned to them, depending on sex and age. Each 'role' in the ritual reproduction of the modes of collective activity was their own essence, their own self, which had not detached itself from the 'mask', from the mode of action assigned to this 'mask' by the ritual of collective life. Each of his fellow tribesmen lived not as an individual in his own right, possessing his own consciousness, but according to the pattern of his whole tribe, which had assigned to him the ritually necessary roles. The ritual mask, the scars on the face and body (marks of initiation), the natural attributes of age and the distinctions between sexes, were for him evidence of his indissoluble unity and blood relationship with the group.

As a system it did not belong to the individual, rather he belonged to it. His mode of life, guided and regimented by the ritually reproduced rules of the 'language of real life' did not allow him to look at himself from the side. This meant that he could not pose the question about his own consciousness. He had consciousness, but he was not yet aware of the fact.

Only with the development of objectified activity and the division of labour is man given the opportunity of treating, first, his activity as an acquired ability, of 'separating himself from his activity', and, second, separating the object of knowledge from knowledge itself, and thus objectively preparing the ground for the question of the nature of consciousness. This question could be asked only after the social division of labour in material and mental labour. As has been said : 'Division of labour only becomes truly such from the moment when division of material and mental labour appears. From this moment onwards consciousness can really flatter itself that it is something other than consciousness of existing practice, that it really represents something without representing something real; from now on consciousness is in a position to emancipate itself from the world and to proceed to the formation of 'pure' theory, theology, philosophy, morality, etc."[1]

But humanity did not advance at once to the production or pure theory. The era of the division of material and mental labour came when the separation of agriculure as a stable mode of production has appeared.

In the first stage, crop farmers were not only tillers, but also owners of the soil. All participated in the work. Then came a stage when the head

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1. *Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, Collected Works, Vol. 5, pp. 44-45*

or the upper crust of the tribe started directing the other people's hands to work. This turns the larger physically toiling part of the community into an instrument of the owners of the land. Thus the co-owners are split up into those who are actually owners and the mass of land workers dependent on them–slaves completely excluded from the relationship of common ownership of the land. Thus were laid the foundations of the vast land-owning despotisms of the East.

During this period, a new relation of social production arose, transforming not only the intercourse within the farming tribes, but also their intercourse with the outside world, particularly with the cattle-raising tribes. Raiding or parleying accompanied by gift-making as a sign of peaceful intentions, these new relations between tribes were based on the relation to the land as property. The exchange of the product of activity as an exchange of 'gifts' gradually evolved into trade.

Now two directly objectified kinds of activity were there–the first is the working of the land, agriculture, arduous physical labour; the second is the working out of how to regulate border conflicts with the neighbouring agricultural or cattle-raising tribes. This work was done by the 'upper crust' which did not do tilling etc.

How can one objectively delimit land? It entails putting a stone landmark at some disputed point, another some distance away, noting a solitary tree as a third point, the top of a hill, as a fourth, and then perhaps putting up another stone, and so on.

All these points are only the means of expressing the border as a line. The border of the land was a line drawn mentally from a post to a stone. And this line made a perfectly real measurement of the land and was itself an object of this labour.

Lines, straight lines, etc may be used to draw a geometrical figure. A line is free of the sensouous immediacy of a given plot of land. It cannot and does not have to be ploughed or dug up. As soon as these modes and means as such–line, figure, angle, etc.–become the object of a person's activity, then nature is represented in them only as an idealised, 'directly universal' object. Activity connected with it is no longer material but mental activity, performed as a set of intellectual operations with given idealised objects.

Thus a great revolution came about in the development of the modes of human activity. The ideal plane of people's objective activity acquired

a relative independence and became a special mode of activity of a special group of people. This set the stage for intensive development of the modes of theoretical goal-setting and of everything that the intellectual culture of society was to produce.

Consequently, intellectual culture appeared on the scene out of necessity. It was not the leisure of the free citizen of the ancient city-state, but the character, the content and object of his socially necessary activity that made possible and essential the invention of free arts.

In fine, the consciousness of primitive man was almost a direct unity of the individual and the collective in the form of ritual with its developed 'language of real life', as a mode of setting goals and ways of achieving them. For a whole epoch a great variety of human communities developed on this basis. Before the emergence of relatively independent theoretical activity the question of the nature of the consciousness, as a specific problem, did not arise. The reason is not this that people did not yet know what we know today. Instead, the reason was that they knew themselves and the whole world in such a way that, far from demanding that the question of consciousness as an individual attribute of man whereby he might understand the world he lived in should be posited, it actually ruled out any such positing. It only becomes necessary when the universal forms in which mental production develops, the production of social goals, the production of knowledge itself, the production of consciousness, turns out to be socially opposed to the particular modes and means of material production. When 'the head set the hands of others to work'; when the idealised object of theory had apparently been stripped of all the sensuous flesh of the real object worked by the hands of other people, only then did the question arise of how the 'purely universal' meaning of a word (geometrical figure, number, etc.) might not correlate, coincide with all the diversity of a unique, inimitable things.

Soul

Soul is a superstition in the sense that earlier man could not understand the functioning of his brain. Brain has centres for memory and imagination. Early man when saw dreams while sleeping, he saw distant areas or his dead relatives. From these scenes he thought that 'something independent of body is there which goes to distant places or which brings the dead in his dreams'. That was a universal phenomenon, because not only Hindus, but mankind as a whole went through this experience. Every tribe or religion has its own version of that 'something'. While some of the other tribes have no use for that something, the tribe of 'Aryas' is still clinging to that 'something' called soul. While others have demystified the soul, the progeny of the Aryas i.e. Hindus continue to live with the mystery.

To believe in an eternal soul, which does not die, is not only a superstition but also a weapon. The Buddha said–'there is no soul'. He explained how a soulist, one who believes in the eternal soul, becomes an egoist and how the belief is a mythya dristhi (ignorance).

Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore wrote in 1932 en route to Persia when he was told that the British Air Force was carrying on bombing missions to the villages of some dissenting sheikhs, as under :

"As the air-craft took off and went on gaining altitude, the connection of the earth with our sense-organs became thin and thinner. It was eventually reduced to a connection with the visual sense alone, and that too without any immediacy about it. The reality of the earth with its infinite variety carried hitherto a sense of certainty about it. Henceforth, however, it became increasingly indistinct. That which had been a three-dimensional reality got reduced to a two-dimensional flat sketch. It is only within the well-defined context of space and time that the varieties of creation retain their distinct individuality. With the loss of this context, creation tends towards dissolution. The earth looked involved in this process of dissolution. It was fading out and its claim to reality no longer pressing on our consciousness.

"In such a state of mind when one showers the weapons of annihilation, one may become terrible in mercilessness. One's hands no longer suffer any hesitation caused by the assessment of the actual crime of those that one is about to kill. The assessment is not there, because the facts and figures on which it can be based just disappear. Man is by nature-attached to the earth. With the elimination of its felt reality, that which sustains the attachment simply snaps.

"The philosophy preached by the Gitā is also some kind of an aircraft like this. It carried the compassionate mind of Arjuna to a dizzy height from where, when he looked below, there remained hardly any distinction between the killer and the killed, between the kin and the foe. There are in human arsenal many a weapon like this made of philosophical stuff. These serve the purpose of concealing the real. These are to be found among the theories of the imperialists, in sociology and in religion. Those on whom death is showered therefrom are left only with one consolation : ***na hanyate hanyamāne śarīrē***–It (the soul) is not slain when the body is slain" *(Pārasye–In Persia")*

The Charvakas say that consciousness comes into being when the elements (matter) meet in a particular proportion in the same way as intoxication comes into being when ingredients are mixed in a particular proportion. The ingredients do not contain intoxication, but when they meet in a particular proportion, intoxication comes into being. Likewise the elements without consciousness when meet in a particular proportion, consciousness comes into being. That is why without that integration of elements consciousness cannot exist in an independent way.

When there is a corpse, there is no consciousness because if some peculiar transformation of matter means the beginning of what is known as (living) body, then the dead body can only mean the starting point of the disintegration of the same change or of the return of matter to its original pre-organised form. So dead body is not a body in the sense that disintegration has set in there, because permanent loss of consciousness is the indication of the beginning of the disintegration.

The body is ever-changing, but the nerve cells do not change. H. Hyden says : "I would like to stress a unique feature of the nerve cells in the body. Somatic cells in general divide, some rapidly over short intervals, others over longer intervals, but they all divide. *The unique*

feature of the nerve cells is that they do not divide. We are born and we die with the same nerve cells. What is the reason for this property in which respect the nerve cells differ from other cells? One main reason, I think, is the necessity of keeping the accumulating experiences of the memory store of each neuron ready for immediate use during the whole of the life cycle. This specialised task of the nerve cells is linked, no doubt, with the intricate form that neurons have acquired–characterised by long branching processes–during their evolution. So I would like to make some comments, later on, about a possible memory mechanism and its substrate in the neuron."

Of the highly specialised properties of the brain cells, a very important one is 'their capacity to produce nucleic acids and proteins on a large scale.' Protein synthesis takes place at the RNA rich sites of the cell body. "The nerve cells contain around 1500 micromicrograms of RNA per cell" and "The big neurons are the RNA... containing cells par excellence in the body." "The RNA proteins produced within the neuron could serve as a substrate for a learning and recalling mechanism–in other words, memory. The capacity to recall the past to consciousness can certainly be expected to reside in a primary mechanism of general biological validity." To these may be added the data contained in the article on "Memory and Protein Synthesis" (Scientific American, June 1967) by Bernard W. Angranoff, showing the connection between the consolidation of memory and the manufacture of protein in the brain.

Thus the phenomenon called memory is not so mysterious.

But the early man did not have this much scientific knowledge; so he could not fully understand how he sees distant places or dead relatives.

Today, we know that the memory of all what has been heard, read or experienced gets stored in the brain. When we sleep, these memories, in the absence of censor, appear as dreams–some in the same form, some in distorted or disguised form. When dead relatives are seen in dreams, no one comes from anywhere else. The old memories of the relative simply get out from the storehouse of memory and appear to us in a vivid form. When the dream ends, the memory simply disappears in the sense that it goes back to the storehouse called subconscious mind.

When we see distant places in dreams, we do not or anything from within does not go out to anywhere, only memories of those distant places,

seen or heard or known through books etc., revive from the subconscious mind in the absence of censor of the brain–the conscious mind.

The early man did not know this, so he imagined 'soul' in his body and thought that it could go to distant places or distant relatives come to us!

The Charvakas say man is a psycho-somatic being because when matter organises in the form of a body, consciousness also emerges. Both are inseparable. That is why consciousness cannot exist without body. The dealists of India, who praised soul and the knowledge of it like anything could not prove the existence of their dear soul without the body. They only inferred the existence of soul; they did not have the perception thereof.

Shankara said to the Charvakas–'See, this is a corpse made up of elements (matter); but there is not consciousness." Thereupon the Charvakas replied. This is corpse, not body. When body comes into being consciousness does come into being. When there is no consciousness, when there is only corpse, it means it is not body; it is simply 'the earth', not the peculiar integration of matter called body; not the peculiar integration of all the required elements.'

They (the Charvakas) counter-questioned–'Where is your soul? Show a soul without the body.'

Shankara could not show soul. He simply said–'We infer soul in a living man.' That was not knowledge, that was simply ignorance, because he did not know about the functioning of brain.

People ask then who is 'I'. It is simply what we call 'self'. *Self is nothing but the coordination of the central nervous system.* Once certain portion of the brain is hurt, the whole personality of the person concerned disintegrates. Self, I, Ego etc. are there so long as brain is not impaired.

When there is no soul, there is no question of the rebirth or resurrection, the Karmas of the so-called this or that birth and the need for Shraddhas. It seems the vested interests fully understood what the Charvakas were saying, but they knowingly ignored all that because the superstition of soul was serving their selfish interests. The poor, the Shudras and other weaker sections of society were misled by them to believe that the sad plight of them was due to their own misdeeds in the so-called previous births. To avoid such a miserable plight you should serve the upper castes silently without malice and do not raise your voice

against the ruler. The priestly class also created a big humdrum to loot the people in the name of the well being of the said soul : Shraddha, offerings to the manes, rites of the dead, all fetched money to the priest.

With the superstition of soul, the ruler was happy as it prevented the revolution; the priest was happy as it fetched cash and kind and the poor and Shudra was happy because he was misled to believe that he would get a happy life in the next birth! When the tyrant and the victim–all were happy who was to pay heed to what the Charvakas were crying from their housetops?

Today modern science has vindicated the stand of the Charvakas. That is why there is awareness among people. No one is ready to be misled in the name of soul, rebirth or life after death. All human beings are today considered, at least in principle, equal and equal opportunities are open or demanded for all. This could happen thousands of years ago, at least in India, if people had given ear to the Charvakas and had refused to be misled by the priest & the king. The Charvakas were truly Lokayatas, i.e. for the people (Loka) and of the people.

Generally people ask : Who is I who speaks? Who is he who says : I? Here the first thing to remember is this–there is no language of god or of soul. These so-called entities do not have any language. Language is a man-made or society-made commodity.

When we say 'I', it is because we speak English. In the Hindi speaking society, they say Main (मैं), in the Sanskrit language they say–Aham (अहम्). As society is man-made and society has developed different languages in different areas, so the so-called soul speaks the language of the area concerned & not in its own language. So the 'I'/Main/Aham is a society-based concept, and has nothing to do with the said soul. As language is man-made, so every child learns that language which his/her parents speak. Even that language the child has to learn–it is an acquired thing, not an inborn quality. Soul cannot say 'I'. It is the brain of child that monitors language–the brain directs different parts of the body–mouth, teeth, lips etc. to facilitate the pronounciation of a particular word having a particular meaning. The soul cannot speak, for, it lacks the required apparatus–it has no mouth of its own. Then how can it say–'I' or Aham? If there is soul, it must have its own language and the means to communicate.

Some people say that I heard the 'inner voice', when I was to decide a particular issue.

This is an illusion. When we decide an issue, we mentally weigh pros and cons of both sides. Both the voices are of our own and inner. We vacillate and after sometime decide this way or that way. If our decision proves good, we call it the result of the inner voice i.e. the voice of soul, whereas the language in which we weigh the pros and cons is always the same as we generally use–the man-made mundane and familiar language. It is not a different or celestial language that may be attributed to soul. That being so, how can there be the innervoice of soul? If there is soul and has a language, it must be different from our day-to-day language and it must be difficult to understand the language of the alien supposedly living as parasite in our body!

The merchants of Atma-Jnana (knowledge of soul) who have been chasing the will-o'-the-wisp themselves were not anything but a pychosomatic entity. They were under a great delusion when they asserted that they have seen the soul (Atma), because they themselves say that the eyes could not see it, as they see only due to soul and that mind cannot understand it, as it is activated by the presence of soul! In such a situation to assert that we have seen the soul is tantamount to say that we have climbed on our own shoulder! How can they see that which, according to them, makes the eye see? Then on what basis they talk of soul? They were ignorant about the role of brain. Today people know of brain, but as an old habit they go on talking about soul, as if subconsciously. The Charvakas were realists and their attitude was scientific. So they could reach right decision though scientfic data were meagre with them. That is their true greatness.

Tailpiece : We have brain, other animals also have; but brains differ in size and capacity. Plants do not have brain.

We have central nervous system, other animals also have; but plants do no have. Likewise we have nociceptive cells, so we feel pain, other animals also have that cell, so they also feel pain; but plants do not have that cell, so they feel no pain.

Lack of Literature

The classic authority on the materialist theory is said to be the Sutras of Brihaspati, which have perished. Our chief sources are the polemical works of other schools.[1]

'The sarva-darshan-sangraha, no doubt, contains a chapter on it, but it is very brief and adds nothing to what may be gathered from other sources. Again, these statements in all probability exaggerate the weak points of the doctrine and may even misrepresent its tenets.'[2]

'The Lokayata is preserved for us only in the form of the purva-paksha, i.e. as represented by its opponents. Not that there never existed any actual treatise of this system. Tucci, Garbe and Dasgupta cite conclusive evidence to show that actual Lokayata texts were known in the ancient and early medieval times. But such texts are lost to us.[3]

There is one book namely **Tattvao paplavasimha.** Some people say that this is a book of Lokayatas. But this is not a materialistic book, as it represents the standpoint of extreme scepticism, according to which no category–either epistemological or ontological–is possible. The another Jayarashi never called it the materialistic view for the very reason that it was not that, nor was his view referred to by any other text as the view of a materialist. The main purpose of the work is to show the impossibility of any valid knowledge (प्रमाण) and hence the impossibility of any view of reality. We know that only the extreme idealists like the shoonya-vadis and Advaita Vedantists do consistently argue that all the normal sources of knowledge are invalid. That was why Nagarjuna chose the title 'Destruction of the sources of valid knowledge' (प्रमाणविध्वंसन) for one of his works and Shankara argued that all use concerning the sources of valid knowledge and objects of valid knowledge (प्रमाणप्रमेयव्यवहार) was based on ignorance (अविद्या). Shriharsha called his philosophical work "खण्डनखण्डखाद्य" (the sweetmeat

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1. *Dr. Radhakrishnan, op.cit., p. 229*
2. *M. Hiriyanna, op.cit., p. 188*
3. *Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya, op.cit., p. 186*

of refutations) because he wanted to establish the Vedantic view by refuting all sources of valid knowledge. Likewise Jayarashi gave the title तत्त्वोपप्लवसिंह (The lion that throws overboard all categories). It is clear like daylight that this book is not a Lokayata text.

'We do not expect our ancient materialists to have gained a positive knowledge of the brain and understood consciousness as its function. Nevertheless, extremely meagre though their scientific data were, the way in which they tried to explain consciousness in terms of their own observations was really remarkable.'[1]

'It (the soul or ātmā) comes into being, according to him, with that peculiar concatenation of the elements which we call the living body. The Cārvaka accordingly does not deny a conscious or spiritual principle; only he refuses to regard it as ultimate or independent. It is a property of the physical aggregate of the body and disappears when the latter disintegrates. It is compared to the intoxicating quality that arises by the mingling of ingredients such as yeast which separately donot possess it. The entire dependence of consciousness on the physical organism, it is added, is also indicated by the fact that it is always seen associated with it and is never found apart from it.[2]

The Cārvākas admit that the existence of consciousness is proved by perception. But they deny that consciousness is the quality of any unperceived non-material or spiritual entity. As consciousness is perceived to exist in the perceptible living body composed of the material elements, it must be a quality of this body itself. What people mean by a soul is nothing more than this conscious living body (caitanya-visista-deha eva ātmā). The non material soul is never perceived. On the contrary, we have direct evidence of the identity of the self with the body in our daily experiences and judgements like, 'I am fat', 'I am lame', 'I am blind'. If the 'I', the self, were different from the body, these would be meaningless.[3]

II

When the Charvakas were face to face with starvation, they adopted different callings to save themselves from death by starvation and they threw away the Brahmanism to wolves and they declared : न चैतद् विद्मो

1. *Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya, op. cit., p. 185*
2. *M. Hiriyanna, op.cit., p. 191*
3. *Chatterjee and Dutta, op.cit. p. 59*

वयं ब्राह्मणाः वा स्मोऽब्राह्मणा वा (कृष्णयजुर्वेदः मैत्रायणी संहिता, 1-4-11) i.e. we do not know whether we are Brahmanas or other than the Brahmanas. You Brahmanavadis, might be knowing who we are because we do not believe in your casteism.

In the Manusmriti (Ch. 3) there is a long list of those Brahmanas who were not to be invited for donation or to take meals at the time of Shraddha or other ceremonies. Among them are those who are atheists (नास्तिकवृत्तयः 3/150), who do not study the Vedas (अनधीयानम्, 3/151), those who are physicians (चिकित्सकान् 3/152); those who sells meat (मांसविक्रयिणः, 3/152); those who subsist by shop-keeping (विपणेन च जीवन्तः, 3/152); he who is a paid servant of a king, he who opposes his teacher; who has forsaken the sacred fire, and is a usurer (प्रेष्यो ग्रामस्य राज्ञश्च, प्रतिरोद्धा गुरोश्चैव त्यक्ताग्निर्वार्धुषिस्तथा. 3/153), one who neglects the five great sacrifices (निराकृतिः 3/154); who is an actor or a singer, one who has broken the vow of studentship, one whose wife is a shudra female (कुशीलवोऽवकीर्णी वृषलीपतिरेव च, 3/155); he who teaches for a stipulated fee and he who is taught on that condition; he who instructs shudra pupils and he whose teacher is a shudra (भृतकाध्यापको यश्च भृतकाध्यापितस्तथा, शूद्रशिष्यो गुरुश्चैव, 3/156); he who has contracted an alliance with outcasts either through the Veda or through a marriage. (ब्राह्यैर्यौनैश्च संबंधैः संयोगं पतितैर्गतः, 3/157); he who eats the food given by the son of an adulteress, a seller of soma-lata, he who undertakes voyages by sea, a bard, an oil-man, (सोमविक्रयी, समुद्रयायी, बंदी, तैलिकः, 3/158); he who is the keeper of a gambling-house; he who sells juice of sugar-cane (कितवः रसविक्रयी, 3/159); he who is a maker of bows and of arrows, one who subsists by gambling, (धनुःशराणां कर्ता, धूर्तवृत्तिश्च, 3/160); one who cavils at the Veda (3/161); one who is a trainer of elephants, oxen, horses or camels; he who subsists by astrology, a bird-fancier and he who teaches the use of arms (हस्तिगोऽश्वोष्ट्रदमको नक्षत्रैर्यश्च जीवति, पक्षिणां पोषको यश्च युद्धाचार्यस्तथैव च, 3/162); one who is an architect, a messenger and he who plants trees (for money) (गृह-संवेशको दूतो वृक्षारोपक एव च, 3/163); one who is a breeder of sporting-dogs, a falconer, one who gains his subsistence from shudras (श्वक्रीडी श्येनजीवी, वृषलवृत्तिश्च, 3/164); one who begs constantly, one who lives by agriculture (नित्यं याचनकस्तथा, कृषिजीवी, 3/165); one who is a shepherd, one who is a keeper of buffaloes, one who is the husband

of a remarried woman, one who is a carrier of dead bodies. (औरभ्रिको माहिषिकः परपूर्वापतिस्तथा, प्रेतनिर्यातकश्चैव. 3/166).

From this we can see certain callings which the Brahmanas were doing–there are at least 29. Who were these Brahmanas? They were those who were facing starvation in Brahmanism and due to their Charvakian way of life. These Brahmanas challenged and exploded the Brahmanistic system, rose in rebellion to counter their so-called spiritual philosophy. Brahmanas in general were doing all this because only a few persons were required for doing the priestly work and whatever they were receiving for doing the same, was meagre to maintain the family. If there is a family of five or six, only 1 or 2 persons would be performing priestly funtion. There may be more families than one in the village. All the members not performing the priestly function, would be dependent on the family. All cannot do the same work as priestly work is not done one daily basis–priest is required occasionally as a part-time worker. So, families could not solely subsist on whatever was received as donation or fee. In such a situation, a Brahmana in general was facing starvtion. This scenario is very meaningful : it bears a witness to the implosion of Brahmanism at the hands of Brahmanas themselves. If the Brahmanas were following 29 sundry callings, who was there to prevent others from following other callings? Stagnation was broken and mobility was in vogue.

In such a fluid situation, if some individuals become ascetics or some untouchables or touchables with some bizarre habits or traditions join the Charvakian fraternity that does not mean that all Charvakas were following all that. In Bengal some Charvakian practices and principles were found among the Sehjias; but all charvakians are not Sehjias. Some sehjias or/and Kapalikas may follow Charvakian principles, but Charvakism is neither Sehjiaism nor Kapalikism.

As the Charvakas were facing the struggle for survival, doing whatever they could, to make both ends meet, they could not pay due attention to save their literature for posterity as jealously as the Vaidikas could.

III

Why lack of Literature?

There is no doubt that literature of Charvaka school is not available. What we have, are the fragments quoted by their opponents in their books for refuattion. Where have the original books gone?

It is generally alleged that their books were destroyed by the Brahmanists. It is a very easy answer but contrary to the facts. There is no evidence that their books were burnt or vandalised by the so-called Brahmanism.

We know that in the history of world there were occasions when books were burnt in a planed way by certain people.

In 391 CE, the Emperor Theodosivs issued a decree that officially outlawed the pagan practices. *The Women's Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets* says, "Therefore, pagan intellectuals and teachers were persecuted and schools were closed. Christian emperors commanded the burning of all books of the philosophers (. ..) After years of vandalism and destruction, St. John Chrysostom proudly boasted, "Every trace of the old philosophy and literature of the ancient world has vanished from the face of the earth." (...) Pope Gregory the Great, denounced all education as folly and forbade Christian layman to read even the Bible. He burned the library of Palatine Apollo, as its secular literature distracted the faithful from the contemplation of heaven."[1]

There is an other story that certain John Grammaticus asked Amr, the victorious muslim general for the "books in the royal library". Amr writes to Omar the Caliph for instructions and Omar replies : If those books are in agreement with the Quran, we have no need of them; and if those are opposed to the Quran, destroy them.

But in the history of India nothing of this kind is reported.[2]

It is easy to put blame on others. No one has ever undertaken the work of knowing the real reasons for the lack of literature. Like lazybones, all are parroting 'that was vandalised by Brahmanism'.

I am at a loss to understand as to why the Brahmanism would destroy the atheistic books when they start their own books by quoting them first and when these quotations are the only extant literature of this school. If they had not quoted them and thus indirectly preserved the important fragments of the philosophical tradition of the atheists, there would have been a total blank i.e. remained nothing of them. What we have, is only due to the accursed Brahmanism!

If we study the atheistic extant literature their main target is Vedic religion. They attack their gods, ridicule their religious practices and

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1. *Quoted in Bhagwan Singh, Itihas ka Vartman (Hindi), Vol. 1, p. 17*
2. *https://www.ancient-origins.net>de...*

debunk their myths. They do not do so with the Buddhists or Jains or others. From that we infer that the atheists were mainly Brahmanas. In the Mahabharata, a Charvaka is burnt, who is mentioned there as a Brahmana. Jayarashi Bhatta is also a Brahmana, as the word 'Bhatta' denotes. Even the Jain writers indirectly endorse our contention when Gunaratna says to the Mimansikas–the philosophers of sacrifice and Karmakanda–that the Charvakas are of your group i.e. Brahmanas, not Jains : तथा च तद्यूथिनः पठन्ति (षड्दर्शनसमुच्चयः, जैनमतम्)

The livelihood of Brahmanas was donation or the fees (dakshina) they got for performing various rituals for the people. But atheist Brahmanas were neither getting donation nor the fees. As they ridiculed the Karmakanda, their lifeline was cut up, as it were. Why would people donate you when you strike at the very root of the concept of donation? This lack of livelihood has direct to do with the lack of literature.

The Charvakas were outspoken persons as revolutionaries always are. So there was always the risk of starvation. Those who were tactful they survived, others faced extinction.

When the Buddha declared that there was no Atma (Anatma-vada), there was a shock wave. But when he got the feedback, he promptly denied that and said : I am not an annihilist–उच्छेदवादी.

In fact he was an annihilist when he denied the existence of soul which is said to survive the death. But he said that rebirth was there and the Karmas of the person caused his rebirth. In this way he saved his position.

How can the karmas cause rebirth when there is no substratum for them? Karmas of their own cannot take rebirth.

Prajnakara Gupta in his commentary on Pramana Varttika of Dharma kirti raises the question and himself replies :

कर्मणां परिणामोऽयमिति सिद्धमिदं कुतः,
अन्वय-व्यतिरेकित्वं कर्मणोऽपि न विद्यते. कारिका 292
न खलु कर्माणि शुभाशुभादिकर्मस्य जगतो वैचित्र्यस्य कारणमिति ज्ञायते.

How can it be proved that this variegated world is the result of the karmas? We do not see that mental karma is main, because it is not seen causing other karmas. From it cause and effect is not proved. So we cannot say that good or bad deeds create this variegated world.

Babasaheb Ambedkar has also commented on this impasse. He says : is there not a terrible contradiction between the denial of the soul and affirmation of karma and rebirth? This contradiction needs to be resolved. (see The Buddha and His Dhamma, Introduction, p. XLII.)

This contradiction is there from the past 2500 years. But it helped the Buddhism to survive. The opponents were so satisfied with his statement : I am not an annihilist, that in subseqent centuries they made him an avatara (incarnation) of the god Vishnu.

But the Charvakas did not make tactical retreat and that proved fatal for them.

It seems, they flourished so long as they lived with their parents who were getting donations and the fees. When they themselves became householders, problem of livelihood surfaced. When their children grew up, they were naturally not inclined to their fathers' philosophy. They knew, because of it, they were starving–not getting donations and fees like other Brahmanas. Such children could not be expected to preserve the book/s authored by their fathers and perpetuate that. Here lies the main cause of the lack of literature.

There seems no undisrupted line of Charvakas. They arose sporadically and their writings remained in existence for short intervals. As they were bereft of the means of subsistence, they could not establish their schools, mathas or tradition.

In the long tradition of the Sanskrit literature, we find only in the Harsha Charitam of Bana Bhatta the reference to the study of Lokayata/ Charvaka philosophy along with other schools of thought in an Ashrama.

In a way, the caste system is responsible for the annihilation of Charvaka school of thought. As per its rules, the Brahmanas were made to live on donation and fees (dakshina). They were there only for those who followed the Brahmanism. Once you raise a finger against its postulates–god, soul, rebirth, etc.–you lose your livelihood and starvation stares you in the face.

So the main reason of the lack of literature is the lack of livelihood and disinclination of the progeny to preserve the accursed philosophy that was the cause of their sad plight.

Literature is preserved by love. If you love the contents of a book or writing, you try to save it. If not, you do not preserve. Almost all

the schools of thought sprinkled obscurantism in their philosophies simply to please those who were to donate so they survived to preach their otherwise rational teachings.

Buddhism is an anti-Brahmanism creed. But the Buddha knew that donation and Bhiksha can be disrupted by certain people who were the guide and leaders at that time in the villages and cities. Householders were in the grip of the priestly class–the Brahmana caste. To ingratiate with this would-be-enemy, the Buddha is eloquent about the Brahmana, though in his own characteristic way. In the Dhammapada, there are 41 gathas (verses) in praise of the Brahmana against the 23 in praise of the Bhikshu and only 18 in praise of Buddha, i.e. 23+18=41. The Brahmana has more gathas than the Buddha or the Bhikshu has. The Brahmana (41) is equivlent to the total of the Buddha and the Bhikshu. Even then the Buddha was opposed by them. How could then the Charvakas, who detested to be ingratiated with the Brahmanas, survive? By ingratiating with the Brahmana they could survive, but they could not because they were not ready to compromise on philosophical points; they were averse to vagueness and did not believe in the middle path which was a euphemism for them for philosophical retreat. Those bravehearts are the martyrs for freedom of thought in ancient India.

There was no good quality paper. All the writing was done on the bark of Bhojtree or on the leaves of Tar tree. That writing material cannot stay for long. So, copies were made from time to time of the old manuscripts. The guru-shishya tradition helped in this direction. But the Charvakas could not establish this tradition because they lacked means of subsistence; when guru was facing starvation, what could he do for the pupil? In the absence of this tradition, new copies of the old manuscripts were not made, which were necessary for the preservation of the Charvakian literature. So when the bark or leaves became too old, the manuscripts were a heap of small pieces.

We are thankful to those who quoted from the Charvakian manuscripts and who while preserving their own writing preserved indirectly the fragments of those lost manuscripts for us–for posterity.

Morality

The morality of Charvaka is guessed and explained on the basis of a verse generally quoted by people. The verse runs like this :

यावज्जीवेत् सुखं जीवेत् ऋणं कृत्वा घृतं पिबेत्,
भस्मीभूतस्य देहस्य पुनरागमनं कुतः?

i.e. so long as one lives, he should live happily; he should get loan and drink Ghee (clarified butter). When once the body is reduced to ashes, how will it return?

From this they infer that the philosophy of Chārvāka is the philosophy of irresponsibility. It preaches to take loan without the intention of repaying it. Take loan, never repay, after death no one will hold you responsible.

This verse is a caricature of the original verse. Before going ahead, let us note that whosover distorted the original verse, he was not as irresponsible as some sections of populace imagine the Chārvākas to be. Even the distortionist could not say—take loan and drink wine! Even he talks only of ghee, that shows the high standards of morality of the original thinkers. Had they been really irresponsible people, the distortionist could easily use the word wine instead of ghee.

The original verse is not a matter of fiction. That is there where this distorted one is mentioned. The Sarvadarshana-Sangrah, in the very beginning of the chapter on Chārvāka mentions a verse which runs like this :

यावज्जीवं सुखं जीवेत् नास्ति मृत्योरगोचरः,
भस्मीभूतस्य देहस्य पुनरागमनं कुतः?

While life is yours, live joyously;
None can escape Death's searching eye :
When once this frame of ours they burn,
How shall it e'er again return?

(Cowell and Gough)

This is the original verse. It does not talk of loan and ghee. It talks about first 'death', and then the non-returnability of the body (देह). Loan

and ghee are not as interconnected as death & the non-returnability are. The author of the *Sangrah* starts with the original verse and discusses the philosophy of Chārvāk. In the end he quotes some verses that were heard here and there. In those verses, that distorted verse is quoted. It shows that the author was aware of the distinction between these two verses. He knew which of them was authentic. That is why he starts with the original verse. In the end he quoted the fake verse as well along with other verses.

Those who start with the fake verse, end up with fake conclusion! The fake verse smells of irresponsibility, so they say that this is the philosophy of irresponsibility, whereas those who are themselves responsible, start with original verse and reach the right conclusion– तस्माद् बहूनां प्राणिनामनुग्रहार्थं चार्वाकमतमाश्रयणीयमिति रमणीयम्[1] (Hence in kindness to the mass of living must we fly for refuge to the doctrine of Chārvāk. Such is the pleasant consummation.)

There is evidence that the materialists devoted themselves also to the pursuit of more refined pleasures by cultivating, for example, the fine arts, the number of which is as large as sixty four (चतुष्षष्ठिकलाः), according to Vatsyayana. Materialists were not egoistic hedonists... Cārvākas, we are told, regard the king as God. This implies their great faith in the necessity of society and its head. This view is further strengthened when we find that political philosophy and economy (dandaniti and vārttā) came to be incorporated at some stage in the philosophy of the Lokāyatikas. It would appear from these facts that there were among the materialists of ancient India, as cultured thinkers as we find among the positivists of Modern Europe or the followers of Democritus in ancient Greece.

The best positive evidence of refined hedonism is found in the ethical philosophy proponded by Vātsyāyana in the second chapter of the kāma-sūtra... His materialist tendency consists in holding that dharma and artha are to be treated only as means to enjoyment, which is, therefore, the supreme end. The element of refinement in his hedonism consists in his emphasis on self-control (brahmacharya) and spiritual discipline (dharma), as well as urbanity (nāgarikavritti), without which human enjoyment of pleasure is reduced to the level of beastly enjoyment. He shows that all physical enjoyment (kāma) is ultimately reducible to the gratification of five senses. He further asserts that the satisfaction of the senses is necessary for the

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1. *This is the last sentence of the author in the end of the chapter on Chārvāka.*

very existence of the body (sarirasthiti), like the satisfaction of hunger. But he also maintains that the senses must be educated, disciplined and cultured through a training in the sixty-four fine arts. This training should be given only after a person has devoted the earlier part of his life to absolute self-continence and study of the Vedas and the other subsidiary branches of learning. He points out that without culture, human enjoyment would be indistinguishable from beastly pleasures... we find then, that Vātsyāyana represents Indian hedonism at its best.[1]

M. Hiriyanna says that the hostile reaction of the people towards the Charvakas is not due to their denouncement of Vedic authority. The Buddhists and the Jains were also hostile to Vedas, but they had not faced, such reaction as the Charvakas had to face. So, the reason of that hostile reaction meted out to them has to be searched somewhere else. According to him, it was the immorality of the Charvakas.

That is totally wrong. The materialists were not immoral. What they simply challenged was the morality based on Vedic religion or Vedic god/gods. Persons like Hiriyanna think that morality cannot exist without the crutches of religion or god; whereas Charvakas say that morality is a secular thing that gradually evolves.

Every one knows what is good and what is bed for him. He knows, to stay without taking meals for a long time, is detrimental to life. Water too is indispensable. If he touches fire with hand, it will turn. What is harmful to life or man is bad and what is not harmful to life is, good.

Similarly, the concept of the truth or untruth is a social thing. If all people tell the truth, society will function in a good way. If I speak the truth, but you tell a lie, the good functioning of the society will get marred. There is no pleasing of god or religious feeling in speaking the truth. It is simply a social thing. To steal is also a social danger or evil. God or religion has nothing to do with it. There are certain gods which are worshipped by professonal thieves before going for stealing. (See Marit-Chhakatikam–an ancient Sanskrit drama). Dacoits of Chambal used to worship goddess Kali before going on looting spree.

Stealing is an evil in a society which has private property. In tribal stage, all members of the tribe were taken care of. So, there was no

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1. *There are some interpolations in the present kama-sutra. The acceptance of God and life after death – are some such interpolations. These and such-like principles are incompatible with the main philosophy of Vatsyayana.*

stealing. Stealing is not eternal. It takes birth in a particular stage of human society, when some over-eat and some are left hungry. If a hungry man forcibly takes any thing to save his life, he is called a robber by the propertied class. If he steals, he is called a thief by the same class.

To prevent people from stealing or robbing, society should adopt humanitarian path of taking care of all the people; society should see that all get food, shelter and clothes. If society is moral, it will do the needful for all its members. But society does not do the needful. It simply dubs him a thief who steals and preaches this pious but empty doctrine that stealing is immoral. To say 'feed all', is immoral in the eyes of the propertied classes. Whatever is not increasing their profit is immoral for them. If a hungry man dies of hunger, this is not immoral in their eyes. At best, they would pray for the so-called soul of the dead.

The Charvakas were moralists up to the hilt, but their sense of morality was different from those Vedic Pandits who were leader of the society at that time.

No doubt the Buddhists and the Jains were also anti-Vedic to an extent. But they could not go beyong a certain limit, because they were to get Bhiksha (food-begging) from these very people.

In the Dhammapada of the Buddhists, there is a long chapter in praise of the Brahmanas. In this chapter there are more verses than there are on the Buddha in the chapter on the Buddha. It was not without valid reason.

Secondly, Buddhism is the middle path avoiding both the extremes. The middle path means neither extremely criticise nor extremely praise. There is a meeting point somewhere, some sort of reconciliation.

The Jains were most individalistic and not interfering in the social set up. So they were less vocal and less harmful.

Thirdly, the Buddhists and Jains were ascetics. All these factors saved the Buddhists and Jains from the wrath of the Vedic Dharmis. But the Charvakas were vocal and irreconcilable, they were revolutionary and uncompromising people. They were not ascetics like the Buddhists and the Jains. They were ordinary people. They were not a humbug, so they did not camouflage under asceticism. We know that when any scoundrel takes shelter in asceticism, he becomes venerable in this land. But the Charvakas refused to do so. They were revolutionary up to the hilt. They could break, but not bend.

Their sincerity of purpose, their uncompromising revolutionary spirit, their strong and formidable arguments were unique. That is why the author of *Sarva-darshana-Sangrah* says : दुरुच्छेदं हि चार्वाकस्य चेष्टितम् (p. 1), i.e. the effort, the arguments, of Charvaka are indeed hard to be eradicated.

The same orthodox author again says–तस्माद् बहूनां प्राणिनामनुग्रहार्थं चार्वाकमतमाश्रयणीयमिति रमणीयम्. i.e. Hence in kindness to the mass of livings must we fly for refuse to the doctrine of Charvaka. Such is the pleasant consummation.

Charvakas were destroyed with economic weapon. They were mostly Brahmanas who had no indepedent means of income. They were dependent mainly on donation and Bhiksha (food-begging). The Buddhists praised Brahmanas as we have seen in the Dhammapada. The Jains did not offend them too much. Moreover, they were dressed as ascetics. So, they were free to get donation and Bhiksha. But the case of the Charvakas was different.

They were not ascetics, secondly, then were from the priestly caste. The priestly caste excommunicated them as they were striking at the roots of that caste. Once excommunicated, they had very meagre chances of survival. They could get neither donation, nor Bhiksha. Here lies the point which scholars have failed to note. The priestly class preached against them for its own survival. They spoke against them, every evil was attributed to them, they were criticised, ridiculed and caricatures of their teachings were put before the public. They say : give the dog a bad name and kill it. They were given a bad name; their sources of income were cut and they were killed.

They were killed not because they were immoral, but because they were sincere and uncompromising and not taking shelter in asceticism. The brave persons were hard to bend. They were moral and their morality was man-centred; not god-centred or religion-based. Their morality was secular and scientific, not traditional and caste-based.

It is wrong to imagine that Charvakas/materialists are immoral or bad persons. Engels rightly says : By the word materialism, the philistine understands gluttony, drunkenness, lust of the eyes, lust of the flesh, arrogance, cupidity, avarice, miserliness, profit-hunting and stock-exchange swindling–in short all the filthy vices in which he himself indulges in private.[1]

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1. *Marx, K. and Engles, F. Selected Works, Vol. 1, p. 375.*

A somewhat similar ethical outlook is usually attributed to the Charvakas.

But there are many evidences to show that this was not so. We quote here only one evidence from the Shantiparva of the Mahabharata.

After the great war, when the Pandava brothers were returning triumphantly, thousands of Brahmanas gathered in the city-gate to bestow blessings on Yuddhisthra. Among them was Charvaka who addressed the king thus : 'The assembly of the Brahmanas is cursing you for you have killed your kins. What have you gained by destroying your own people and murdering you own elders?'

This outburst of Charvaka stunned the assembled Brahmanas. Yudhishthira felt mortally wounded and wanted to die. But then the other Brahmanas regained their senses and told the king that this Charvaka was only a demon in disguise. And then they burnt him, the dissenting Charvaka to ashes.

Here the philosopher said nothing that could even remotely suggest any ethics of blind selfish pleasure. Pleasure is grossly suggested in the Gita when it is said : you will attain heaven if you are killed in this battle, and, if you win it, you will enjoy this earth.

Those who plead and preach pleasure, they are accusing Charvaka of pleasure–a sure case of kettle calling the pot black!

In Mahabharata war kins were killed. Charvaka has simply stated that. But for making this humanitarian statement he is called 'a demon in disguise' and burnt to ashes. See which side is humanist and which is demonic! Talking humanism Charvaka becomes a demon, and those who burnt a man alive became the custodians of Dharma! That was the priestly, the religious & spiritual way! The way of the truth, of Dharma!

Before ending this discussion, we want to clear one point. We have not avoided the word hedonism which is used by the so-called spiritualist and theists to downgrade the Charvakas, because the Upanishads, said to be the repository of spiritualism, praise this like anything. They say that Brahman is pleasure, also creatures are born out of pleasure and so born they live with pleasure and in the end, they enter into pleasure :

* आनन्दो ब्रह्मेति व्यजानात्, आनन्दाद् ह्येव खल्विमानि भूतानि जायन्ते, आनन्देन जातानि जीवन्ति, आनन्दं प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्तीति. (तैत्तिरीय उप. 3/6)

* रसो वै सः (That Brahman is pleasure) (तैत्तिरीय उप. 2/7)

* आनन्दं ब्रह्मणो विद्वान्, न बिभेति कुतश्चनेति. (He who knows the pleasure of Brahman, does not afraid of anyone) (तैत्तिरीय उप. 2/9)

This Ananda-vada is hedonism and no one has ever questioned that, but when they talk of Charvaka, they spew venom against their Ananda-vada. That is hydraheadedness. When the pleasure of the Upanishads is unquestionable, why does the same become questionable with respect to the Charvakas?

They have patent reply–the Anand/Pleasure of the Upanishads is spiritual, whereas the Anand of Charvaka is materialistic and mundane. The is not correct–either they have not read the Upanishads or are telling a patent lie. The Bṛhdāraṇyaka Upaniṣad while telling the nature of this spiritual pleasure uses the simile of the man who has his lover in his arms :

तद्यथा प्रियया स्त्रिया संपरिष्वक्तो न बाह्यं किंचन वेद नान्तरम्, एवमेवायं पुरुषः प्राज्ञेनात्मना संपरिष्वक्तो न बाह्यं किंचन वेद नान्तरम्. (बृहदारण्यक उप. 4-3-21)

As a man, fully embraced by his beloved wife, does not know anything at all, either external or internal, so does this infinite being (self), fully embraced by the Supreme Self, not know anything at all, either external or internal.

(Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad, translated by Swami Madhavananda, Advaita Ashrama, p. 460)

The Swami has tried to whitewash the meanings of the text by using the word wife, instead of woman. But even then he could not spiritualise this gross materialism, this sensuous pleasure.

Shankara, the oldest extant commentator, explaining the text used the word कामुकः (amorous)—

यथा लोके प्रिययेष्टया स्त्रिया संपरिष्वक्तः सम्यक् परिष्वक्तः कामयन्त्या *कामुकः* सन् न बाह्यमात्मनः किंचन किंचिदपि वेद एवमेव प्राज्ञेन परमार्थेन स्वाभाविकेन स्वेनात्मना परेण ज्योतिषा सम्परिष्वक्तः सम्यक् परिष्वक्तः न बाह्यं किंचन वस्त्वन्तरं नाप्यान्तमात्मनि वेद.

(As in the world a man, fully embraced by his beloved wife (woman), both desiring each other's company, does not know anything at all, either external to himself or internal,–but he knows everything outside and inside when he is not embraced by her and is separated, and fails to know only during the embrace owing to the attainment of unity–so, like the examples cited, does this infinite beings fully embraced by the Supreme Self not know anything at all, either external or internal.)

From this all, it is clear this that the so-called spiritualism is not unmixed with the sensuous! The spiritualists of the Upanishads were as sensuous as the Charvakas were. So why there are different yardsticks with reference to their hedonism? As the Yoga-vadis and Ayurvedikas have no indegenous apparatus for measuring blood-pressure and suger contents of blood, and so are dependent on the much maligned allopathy for such tests, so the so-called spiritualists of the Upanishads are handicapped with regard to the measurement of the spiritual pleasure. So they fall back on the sensuous of the materialistic world for the measurement thereof. Those who live in glass houses should not throw stones on others.

Actually, the so-called spiritualist of the Upanishads does not skyrocket to some mysterious world. On the contrary, he nosedives to the sensuous and sexual. That is why he remembers the embrace of a woman as if sex-starved. That being so, his pleasure cannot be different and superior to the pleasure of the Charvakas.

II

Every one who starts a diatribe against the Charvakas poses to be a moralist and pretends to be belonging to a chaste moralist tradition. The Hindu writers are more pretentious than the non-Hindus in this regard. The pious people become poisonous from the very outset as if what Brahma did with his daught was instructed by the Charvakas or what Durvasa did with Kunti–the innocent minor girl–was done at the behest of the Charvakas or what Vyasa did with the widows of Vichitravirya, was done as per the instructions of the Charvakas. Those who live in glass houses should not throw stones at others.

The opponents of the philosophy of the Charvaka have the right to criticize it, but there should be objectivity. In stead, they start with a biased mind and soon start spewing venom as if Charvaka has cause them personal injury. They unnecessarily create a hullabaloo against the them and pose themselves as moralists without showing even one word where Charvakas preach immorality. No one has until now produced any authentic Charvakian quotation to prove what they allege. It is the Hindu authors themselves who allege that Charvaka is unethical, whereas Charvakas nowhere hold a brief for immorality.

It is Shankara who says that there are no do's and don'ts for those who transcend Nature निस्त्रैगुण्ये पथि विचरतां, को विधिः को निषेधः.[1]

No one can transcend Nature who is born of nature or made of matter, whoever Jnani (one who is engaged in the cultivation of traditional knowledge) he may be. Jnana is a human product; every human society at different times had different standards of Jnana (knowledge); but with such Jnana on one could transcend Nature, everyone has to submit to it. Those who pretend to transcend Nature are liars. If there are such persons as trancend the Nature, why are they amoral? Why are they beyond the do's and don'ts? Who does give them the license to do whatever they want to do? Why are no holds barred in their case?

No moralist worth his name has criticized Shankara for this licentiousness or labelled him as amoralist. Charvaka has nowhere supported licentiousness. Even then they are the targets of the invectives of the holy people!

From the extant Charvakian literature one does not get the impression that they were without morality. In fact no society can exist without morality. Even the bands of those who are generally considered as immoral, like thieves, dacoits etc., do have internal morality. Even animals have morality to a certain extent. Then how can the Charvakas without morality? They prefer ghee, not wine; they abhore flesh-eating and those religious scenes of Ashvamedha where queen is subjected to savage obscenity.

Morality is not a static thing. It changes from time to time, from area or country to country or from tribe to tribe. There was time when eating the flesh of the members of opponent tribes was considered moral. The Hindus tell gleefully how their Bhima in the Mahabharata war drank the blood of Dusshasana. But today many countries have banned capital punishment even for habitual murderers. Jails have been turned into Sudharghars (improvement homes). The forefathers of today's Hindus, at one time, used to pour molten lac or lead into the ears of Shudras who happened to hear the recital of the Vedic matras; but today they are professors, who were born among those who were labelled as Shudras, and teach Vedic hymns to the socalled upper caste students in Pathashalas and Colleges. Morality has evolved. So you

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1. *Quoted in B.G. Tilak, Gita Rahasya (Hindi), Fourth Reprint, page 370, 1924, Poona.*

cannot label as immorality the morality that was in vogue when the Charvakian literature was being written.

The Hindu tradition of the moralists who criticize the Charvakas for alleged lack of morality, sanctions such atrocious practices and institutions, as Niyoga, polygamy, polyandry, the cosomic brothel where the same prostitutes are available to the grandfather and the grandson, casteism, untouchability, Sutee, etc. Are all these moral practices? Charvakas do not preach such balderdash. Then how can they be termed as immoral?

The Charvakas simply say that try to live a happy life as possibly as can be. This 'hedonism' (the pursuit of pleasure) is touted as the greatest and gravest sin of them. The socalled Moralists/traditionalists say that we seek permanent pleasure, whereas the Charvakian hodonism in short-lived. If that is the case, then your are more hedonists than the Charvakas! That being so, what right have you got to condemn them for hedonism?

Your Upanishads say :

1. आनन्दं ब्रह्मणो विद्वान् (तै. उप. 2/9)

(One who knows the pleasure of Brahman.)

2. आनन्दो ब्रह्मेति व्यजानात्. आनन्दाद् ह्येव खल्विमानि भूतानि जायन्ते, आनन्देन जातानि जीवन्ति, आनंदं प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्तीति. (तै. उप. 3/6)

(He came to know that Brahman is pleasure. All the creatures take birth from that pleasure; all live owing to pleasure and in the end all enter the pleasure.)

3. रसो वै सः, रसं ह्येवायं लब्ध्वाऽऽनन्दीभवति (तै. उप. 2/7)

(The supreme being is pleasure. The soul when attains him, becomes pleasureful.)

If these Rishis of the Upanishads swimming in the pool of pleasure are not hedonists, then how can the poor Charvaka be a hedonist, who believes, unlike the Rishis, only in temporary pleasure. Here the pot is calling the kettle black and they call it morality! If such-like immorality is morality, then surely Charvaka is not a moralist, because he does not believe in selective morality! He walks the talk. He does not walks something and talks something totally different. They say :

मनस्येकं वचस्येकं महात्मनाम्,
मनस्यन्यद् वचस्यन्यद् दुरात्मनाम्.

(Good people walk what they talk; but bad people say something and do totally different.)

Those who bark at Charvaka are mainly those who swear by the Upanishads, Gita, etc. In the Kaushitaki-Brahanopanishad we read about their morality : इन्द्रः स होचाच मामेव विजानीह्येतदेवाहं मनुष्याय हिततमं मन्ये, यन्मां विजानीयात् त्रिशीर्षाणं त्वाष्ट्रमहनमवाङ्मुखान्यतीन्सालावृकेभ्यः प्रायच्छं बह्वीः संधा अतिक्रम्य दिवि प्रह्लादीनतृणवहमन्तरिक्षे पौलोमान् पृथिव्यां कालकाश्यांस्तस्य मे तत्र न *लोम च नामीयते.* स यो मां विजानीयान्नास्य केन च कर्मणा लोको मीयते, न *मातृवधेन न पितृवधेन न स्तेयेन न भ्रूणहत्यया नास्य पापं* च न चकृषो मुखान्नीलं वेत्तीति. (कौषीतकिब्राह्मणोपनिषद्, 3/1)

i.e. To Pratardana Indra said : Understand me only. That is what I deem most beneficial for mankind, namely that one should understand me. I slew the three-headed son of Tvashtri. I delivered the Arunmukhas, the ascetics, to the wolves. Transgressing many agreements, I killed the people of Prahlada in the sky, the Paulomas in the atmosphere, the Kalakashyas or Kalakanjas on earth. Of me, such as I was then, not a single hair was injured. So he who knows me thus, by no deed whatsoever of his is his world injured, not by stealing, not by killing of his father or mother. If he wishes to commit a sin, the dark colour does not depart from his face.[1]

This passage is self-explanatory. Here Indra boasts of his exploits–misdeeds–killing of Tvashtri's son; throwing of ascetics to wolves; transgressing of many agreement & the killings of the people of Prahlada, the Paulomas and Kalakashyas. He triumphantly declares : when I did this all, not a single hair of mine was injured.!

Then he says that there is benefit in understanding me. He who understands me so, does not incurr sin by stealing, by killing an embryo, by killing his mother, and by killing his father!

This is Upanishadic morality : no holds barred.

Shrimad Bhagawat Gita does not lag behind in this matter. It says :

यस्य नाहंकृतो भावो बुद्धिर्यस्य न लिप्यते,
हत्वाऽपि स इमांल्लोकान्न हन्ति न निबध्यते. गीता 18/17

He who has not the feeling of egoism, whose intellect is not tainted, he does not kill, nor does he become bound, even by killing there creatures.[2]

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1. *S. Radhakrishanan, The Principal Upanishads, p. 774.*
2. *Bhagvad Gita with Shakara-Bhashya, tr. Swami Gambhirananda, Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta, p. 679.*

Here again general clemency is declared. Arjuna killed his relatives, grand father and Guru following this formula. And these Gita-walas say that Charvaka has no morality. A sure case of the pot calling the kettle black!

The Baudhhas also criticize Charvaka; but themselves they are repeating like a parrot what the Upanishads had said before them. The Dhammapada says :

(294) मातरं पितरं हन्त्वा राजानो द्वे च खत्तिये,
रट्ठं सानुचरं हन्त्वा अनीधो याति ब्राह्मणः. (पकिण्णवगो 21,5)

A Brahmana becomes sorrowless/sinless after killing the mother, father, two kshatrya kings and the whole nation along with servants.

(295) मातरं पितरं हन्त्वा राजानो द्वे च सोत्थिये,
वेय्यग्घपञ्चमं हन्त्वा अनीघो याति ब्राह्मणो. (21, 6)

A Brahmana becomes sorrowless/sinless after killing the mother, father, two Veda-knowing Brahmana kings and a tiger.

These verses in the Dhammapada seem to be eye-soars, because they are not composed in a non-violent language. So some shocked people try to give them allegorical meanings.[1]

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1. *B.G. Tilak says in his Gita Rahasya (p. 371), that 'it is obvious that Dhammapada here follows the Kaushitaki Upanishad. But the Buddhist authors say here mother means lusty desires, father means egoism. But I think the Buddhists could not know the real ethical meaning of the verses, so they apply allegorical meanings. In the Kaushitaki Upanishad, Indra says before the words "Matrivadhena Pitrivadhena" (मातृवधेन, पितृवधेन) that 'though I have killed the son i.e. Brahmana, even then no sin attaches to me.' It is obvious that here clear cut murder is meant, not allegorical. The meanings of these two verses as offerred by Max Muller (SBE, Vol. X, pp. 70-74), to are not right according to me.'*

Mr. Tilak further says (p. 372) it is said to Arjuna in the Gita that 'if your intellect becomes pure and clean and you fight the war without the desire of fruit of your deeds, then by killing Bhishma (grandfather) and Drona (guru) you would remain sinless – you would not incur sin of killing the grandfather and the Guru.'

Swami Dwarika Das Shastri renders the word Brahmana as Bhikshu. (see his edition published by Chaukhamba Sanskrit Series office, Varanasi, 2005, p. 80), whereas Dr. Radhakrishnan in his edition (pp. 152-53) says 'the verse indicates the sanctity and prestige which the Buddha gave to the Brahmanas; for he uses the word Brahmana for the Arhat or the follower of the Buddha who has attained to final sanctification. See ch. XXVI, Brahmana.'

A friend of mine said : you should consult the Dhammapada translated by A.P. Buddhadatta Mahathera. (Bauddhacharya Shanti Swaroop Bauddha

Bathe with clothes on : Untouchability[1]

"If a man touches the Buddhists, the Pāshupatas, the Jains, the Lokayatas, the followers of Kapila and the Brāhmana living by condemned actions, he has to purify himself by bathing with the clothes on."[2]

This quotation is from the voluminous 'History of Dharma Shastras' written by Bharata Ratna Dr. P.V. Kane. The quote is found in at least five books of Dharma Shastra, namely, Shat-trinshan-mata, Smriti-chandrika, Brahmanda Purana, Apararka and Mitakshra.

In all of these religious books untouchability is preached against all those who have different philosophical views than the Brahmanical

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very kindly provided me with a photostat copy of the same when I shared my problem with him. I am very thankful to him). The Mahathera also rendered the verses of the Dhammapada in the same way : Having slain/mother, father, two warrior kings, and having destroyed acountry together with its revenue officer ungrieving goes the Brahman. (21/5).

Having slain mother and father, two Brahman kings, and having destroyed the (path haunted by a) tiger, as the fifth, ungrieving goes the Brahmin. (Dhammapada : Anthology of the Sayings of the Buddha p. 79)

I fail to understand the compulsion for the Buddha, that caused him to use such outrageous and violent language as is reminiscent of the Upanishadic language. Is not the allegory used to cover the unpleasant? If Buddhists can take shelter behind the allegory, who can prevent the Vaidikas from doing so to make their books as innocent as the books of the Buddhist are?

Those who insist on allegory fail to convince as to why the word 'mother' used here does not mean 'the woman who gives birth' and the word 'father' used here does not mean 'the male parent'. And why do here the words mother and father mean passion and ego respectively? What did prevent the Buddha from using the words passion and ego instead of using the words mother and father? Of what kind is the message given by the words 'after killing the mother' and 'after killing the father'? We must not rule out the possibility of interpolation which was limitless when it was oral, not in written form.

1. *षट्त्रिंशन्मतात्—बौद्धान् पाशुपतांश्च लोकायतिकनास्तिकान्,*
   विकर्मस्थान् द्विजान् स्पृष्ट्वा सचैलो जलमाविशेत्.

   (अपरार्क, पृ. 923; स्मृतिचन्द्रिका 1, पृ. 118; मिताक्षरा (याज्ञवल्क्यस्मृति 3/30) Quoted from ब्रह्माण्डपुराण; वृद्धहारीत, 9/359, 363/364; शान्तिपर्व (महाभारत), 76/6
2. *P.V. Kane, History of Dharma Shastra, Vol. 1, p. 65*

views, be they Buddhists, Pashupatas (followers of Shiva), the Jains, the Lokayatas or the followers of Kapila Rishi. This zero tolerance of the other's view is fascism. This version of fascism is responsible for the destruction of the literature of the Lokayatas. It seems that these people of different viwes became later day Untouchables. The Constitution of India has abolished Untouchability in legal terms, but the Untouchability in the form of intolerance is intact in the minds of those whose forefathers composed the verse in question. Will that end?

We have seen what the five Dharma Shastras say about the Atheists.

Manu says :

पाषण्डिनो विकर्मस्थान् बैडालव्रतिकाञ् छठान्
हैतुकान् बकवृत्तींश्च वाङ्मात्रेणापि नार्चयेत्. (4/30)

One should not even talk with those who are Pakhandis (anti-Veda), who perform opposite actions as the Buddhist monks and who are argumentative or logicians.

All this is declared by pious people. Are they pious or paranoiac persons? These holy cows seem to be suffering from the mental disorder known as touch-me-not-ism. Are they religious or reeling under the heap of hatred? They are not only spreading hatred, but also presenting a bad ideal for inter-personal behaviour.

Those who have been declared as untouchables in the five Dharma Shastras are also, it seems, declared so owing to their argumentativeness.

Argument/logic is anathema to the Dharma Shastras. The Brahma Sutra is also against logic. There is a special sutra in it—

तर्काप्रतिष्ठानादप्यन्यथाऽनुमेयमिति चेदेवमप्यविमोक्षप्रसंगः (ब्रह्मसूत्र 2-1-11)

Shankara waxes eloquent while commenting on this sutra in his commentary on the Brahma Sutra. He says :

इतश्च नागमगम्येऽर्थे केवलेन तर्केण प्रत्यवस्थातव्यम्. यस्मान्निरागमाः पुरुषोत्प्रेक्षामात्रनिबंधनास्तर्का अप्रतिष्ठिता भवन्ति. उत्प्रेक्षाया निरंकुशत्वात्. तथाहि कैश्चिदभियुक्तैर्यत्नेनोत्प्रेक्षितास्तर्का अभियुक्ततरैरन्यैराभास्यमाना दृश्यन्ते. तैरप्युत्प्रेक्षिताः सन्तस्ततोऽन्यैराभास्यन्त इति न प्रतिष्ठितत्वं तर्काणां शक्यमाश्रयितुं, पुरुषमतिवैरूप्यात्. अथ कस्यचित्प्रसिद्धमाहात्म्यस्य कपिलस्य चान्यस्य वा संमतस्तर्कः प्रतिष्ठित इत्याश्रीयेत. एवमप्यप्रतिष्ठितत्वमेव. प्रसिद्धमाहात्म्यानुमतानामपि तीर्थकराणां कपिलकणभुक्प्रभृतीनां परस्परविप्रतिपत्तिदर्शनात्. (ब्रह्मसूत्रम्, शांकरभाष्योपेतम्, पृ. 193)

For this further reason, one should not on the strength of mere logic challenge something that has to be known from the Vedas. For reasoning, that has no Vedic foundation and springs from the mere imagination of persons, lacks conclusiveness. For man's conjecture has no limits. Thus it is seen that an argument discovered by adepts with great effort is falsified by other adepts; and an argument hit upon by the latter is proved to be hollow by still others. So nobody can reply on any argument as conclusive, for human intellect differs. If, however, the reasoning of somebody having wide fame, say for instance, Kapila or someone else, be relied on under the belief that this must be conclusive, even so it surely remains inconclusive, in asmuch as people, whose greatness is well recognized and who are the initiators of scriptures (or schools of thought)–for instance, Kapila, Kaṇād, and others–are seen to hold divergent views.[1]

Despite this long harangue against reasoning and logic, Shankara uses reasoning and logic against his opponents. Even Manu after spewing venom against logicians, says that he who uses reasoning, subordinated to the Vedas, he knows the dharma—

आर्षं धर्मोपदेशं च वेदशास्त्राविरोधिना,
यस्तर्केणानुसंधत्ते स धर्मं वेद नेतरः. (मनु. 12/106)

What does this mean? This means that they need logic and reasoning but only as an errand boy who sits down at their bidding or who stands up when they say stand up. They are afraid of that logic or reasoning which leads them by the nose. They need it and are afraid of it as well, because they want to have a cake and eat it too. That is their moral as well as philosophical weakness because they have their own axes to grind.

They are partisans and prejudiced people, not true seekers; because a seeker follows the logic and concurs with its conclusions, while a prejudiced person distorts the logic so that it falls in line with his pre-conceived notions :

आग्रही बत निनीषति युक्तिं तत्र यत्र मतिरस्य निविष्टा,
पक्षपातरहितस्य तु युक्तिर्यत्र तत्र मतिरेति निवेशम्.[2]

We reject the prejudiced fanatics and welcome the seekers after truth.

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1. *Brahma-Sūtra-Bhāṣya of Śaṅkarācārya, Tr. by Swami Gambhirananda, Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta, p. 321*
2. *हरिभद्र, षड्दर्शनसमुच्चय, गुणरत्न कृत टीका*

In the Vedic literature i.e. in the Niruktam of Yaska, we find a mythological story which runs thus :

मनुष्या वा ऋषिषूत्क्रामत्सु देवानब्रुवन्—'को न ऋषिर्भविष्यतीति?' तेभ्य एतं तर्कमृषिं प्रायच्छन् (निरुक्त 13/11)

i.e. when the Rishis were going up, leaving the world, men asked the gods–'who will be our rishi or guide now?' The gods gave them Reasoning (तर्क) as rishi (guide). This shows that reasoning (तर्क) is equivalent to all the Rishis collectively, not to one Rishi. That is the status of reasoning, that is the importance of Reasoning, not only in the Vedic period but also in the whole history of mankind.

Some Ancient Atheists

It is wrong to say that ancient materialists were plain hedonists. From the ethical and practical point of view the most significant contribution of them appears to be their revolt against the doctrine of karma, which had in fact been and is, in the words of Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya, "the pivot of Indian reaction." The doctrine of karma played a very big role in and outside philosophical circles. 'All rise of metaphysical speculation on the part of the Indian systems of philosophy–and more particularly the nourishment and development of this speculation–has been due to a belief in the doctrine of karma and a desire to get gid of the transmigrating circle and thus attain transcendental release.' Even pronounced atheists like the Buddha and the Jains could not free themselves from the clutches of this doctrine. In their philosophies, this doctrine became so important that it made god superfluous. There are others who have both the god and the karma.

Says Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya, 'Made to percolate for centuries among the masses through such methods of popularisation as the village recitales of the epics, mythologies and various other types of popular works on religion, it did acquire a living grip on the minds of our millions.'

The essence of this doctrine in this : Every human action has its own inevitable result. A virtuous action results in something good, a vicious action in something bad. Therefore, whatever you enjoy or suffer now is the result of your own past actions and the way you are now acting is going to determine your future. Such a doctrine had inevitably to lean on the conception of a transmigratory soul. For it has to explain why the virtuous man is frequently found to suffer a life of miserable existence and the vicious to prosper. Reinforced by the idea of rebirth and the Other World, the doctrine claims that the virtuous action, though it may not bring prosperity in this life, is sure to do so in some future life while the prosperity of a person who is now vicious must be the result of some good actions of his past life, just as his present vices, though not punished right now, will surely make him miserable in some future life. One obvious implication of this doctrine, therefore, is that our own past looms over

us like a dark unalterable force. As Radhakrishnan puts is, 'whatever happens to us in this life we have to submit in meek resignation, for it is the result of our past doings.'[1] Its other implication is to offer some kind of justification for the observed diversity of human conditions. As Hiriyanna explains, 'its value as a hypothesis for rationally explaining the observed inequities of life is clear.'[2] It is, thus, easy to understand why, beginning from the times of the Upanishads, this *karma*-doctrine was harnessed to justify the caste system.

A Kshatriya ruler in the Chandogya Upanishad says : तद् य इह रमणीयचरणा अभ्याशो ह यत्ते रमणीयां योनिमापद्येरन् ब्राह्मणयोनिं वा क्षत्रिययोनिं वा वैश्ययोनिं वाथ, य इह कपूयचरणा अभ्याशो ह यत्ते कपूयां योनिमापद्येरन् श्वयोनिं वा सूकरयोनिं वा चाण्डालयोनिं वा. (5/10/7)

(Accordingly, those who are of pleasant conduct here, the prospect is indeed that they would attain a pleasant womb–either the womb of a Brahmin or the womb of a Kṣatriya or the womb of a Vaiśya. But those who are of stinking conduct here, the prospect is indeed that they would enter a stinking womb–either the womb of a dog or the womb of a swine, or the womb of a Candāla'.)

In the Gita (4/13) again God himself was made to declare that He created the four castes according to the same law of *karma* : 'the four-caste division has been created by Me according to the division of virtue and action गुणकर्मविभागशः.

Ancient materialists–Chārvāka/Lokayatas–were by far the only philosophers to have vigorously rejected this doctrine of karma. They used the weapon of Svabhāva-vāda (the doctrine of natural causation) to counter the karma-vada and the supernaturalism. That is why Jain writer Guṇaratna says : अन्ये पुनराहुः, मूलतः कर्मैव नास्ति, स्वभावसिद्धः सर्वोप्ययं जगत्प्रपञ्च इति. (according to some there is no such thing called karma at all; all the manifold world is to be explained by natural causes.)

As the ancient materialists rejected the concept of a transmigrating soul, so it was natural for them to reject the law of karma.

One of the earliest Indian materialists was **Ajita Keśkambali**, possibly a contemporary of the Buddha. An early Buddhist source summed up his view thus :

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1. *Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy, Vol. 1, 249*
2. *M. Hiriyanna, Outlines of Indian Philosophy, p. 188*

There is no such thing, O king, as alms or sacrifice or offering. There is neither fruit nor result of good or evil deeds... A human being is built up of the four elements. When he dies the earthly in him returns and relapses to the earth, the fluid to the water, the heat to the fire, the wind to the air, and his faculties pass into space. The four bearers, on the bier as a fifth, take his dead body away; till they reach the burning ground, men utter forth eulogies, but there his bones are bleached, and his offerings end in ashes. It is a doctrine of fools, this talk of gifts. It is an empty lie, mere idle talk, when men say there is profit therein. Fools and wise alike, on the dissolution of the body, are cut off, annihilated, and after death they are not.[1]

Summed up his views are thus : Neither is there any other world, nor are there beings reborn otherwise than from parents, nor is there fruit or result of deed well-done or ill-done.

Another materialist of roughly the same period was **Pāyāsi,** described as a prince by both the early Buddhist and Jaina sources. The Buddhist dialogue **Pāyāsi-suttanta** and the Jaina work **Rāyapaseṇaijja** were devoted to the refutation of his views and to the description of his eventual conversion to Buddhism and Jainism respectively.

We quote from the **Pāyāsi-suttanta :** I have had friends, companions, relatives, men of the same blood as myself, who have taken life, committed thefts, or fornication, have uttered lying, slanderous, abusive, gossipy speech, have been covetous, of malign thoughts,or evil opinions. They anon have fallen ill of mortal suffering and disease. When I had understood that they would not recover from that illness, I have gone to them and said : 'According to the views and opinion held, sirs, by certain wanderers and Brahmins, they who break the precepts of morality, when the body breaks up after death, are reborn into the Waste, the Woeful Way, the Fallen Place, the Pit. Now you, sirs, have broken those precepts. If what those reverend wanderers and Brahmins say is true, this, sirs, will be your fate. If these things should befall you, sirs, come to me and tell me, saying : "There is another world, there is rebirth not of parents, there is fruit and result of deeds well-done and ill-done." You, sirs, are for me trustworthy and reliable, and what you say you have seen, will be even so, just as if I myself had seen it." They have consented to do this, saying, 'Very good', but they have neither

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1. *Rhys Davids, Dialogues of the Buddha, Vol. 1, p. 73*

come themselves, nor dispatched a messenger. Now this... is evidence for me that there is neither another world, nor rebirth not by human parents, nor fruit or results of deeds well done and ill.

Similarly, went on Pāyāsi, he had friends and kinsmen who lived a perfectly virtuous life and were therefore, on the assumption of the *karma*-doctrine, supposed to be reborn 'into the bright and happy world'; they agreed to report to Pāyāsi if they were actually so reborn; but none after death made any such report which, for Pāyāsi, was another proof that there was no other world, rebirth or *karma*.

Pāyasi's next argument had a refreshing sarcasm about it. It urged upon the supporters of the *karma*-doctrine to put into practice the precepts they professed :

I see wanderers and Brahmins of moral and virtuous dispositions, fond of life, averse from dying, fond of happiness, shrinking from sorrow. Then I think : 'If these good wanderers and Brahmins were to know this–"When once we are dead we shall be better off"–then these good men would take poison, or stab themselves, or put an end to themselves by hanging, or throw themselves from precipices. And it is because they do not know that, once dead, they will be better off, that they are fond of life, averse from dying, fond of happiness, disinclined for sorrow.' This is for me evidence that there is no other world, no beings reborn otherwise than of parents, no fruit and no result of deeds well and ill done.

But let us return to Pāyāsi. In the *Dialogue* under discussion he offered four more arguments which, notwithstanding the crude methods of punishment then prevalent, cannot but impress us with their insistence of experimental verification.

Take the case of men who having taken a felon red-handed bring him up, saying : 'This felon, my lord, was caught in the act. Inflict on him what penalty you wish.' And I should say : 'well then, my masters, throw this man alive into a jar; close the mouth of it and cover it over with wet leather, put over that a thick cement of moist clay, put it onto a furnace and kindle a fire.' They, saying 'Very good', would obey me and... kindle a fire. When we knew that the man was dead, we should take down the jar, unbind and open the mouth, and quickly observe it, with the idea : 'Perhaps we may see his soul coming out!' We don't see the soul of him coming out! This is for me evidence that there neither is another world, nor rebirth other than by parentage, nor fruit or result of deeds well or ill done.

Similar experiments were proposed by the prince for a felon caught in the act and was therefore going to be executed :

And I say : 'Well then,my masters, take this man and weigh him alive, then strangle him with a bowstring and weigh him again'. And they do so. While he lives, he is more buovant, supple; wieldy. When he is dead, he is weightier, stiffer, unwieldier. This is evidence for me that there is neither another world, nor rebirth other than by human parentage, nor fruit nor result of deeds well-done or ill-done.

Again :

Take the case of the men taking a felon red-handed and bringing him up saying : 'My lord, this felon was caught in the act. Inflict on him what penalty you wish.' And I say : 'Well, my masters, kill this man by stripping off cuticle and skin and flesh and sinews and bones and marrow.' They do so. And when he is half dead, I say : 'Lay him on his back, and perhaps we may see the soul of him pass out.' And they do so, but we see the passing of no soul. Then I say : 'Well then, lay him bent over... on his side... on the other side... stand him up... stand him on his head... smite him with your hand... with clods... on this side... on that side... all over; perhaps we may see the soul of him pass out.' And they do so, but we see the passing of no soul. He has sight and there are forms, but the organ does not perceive them; he has hearing and there are sounds, but the organ does not perceive them; he has smell and there are odours, but the organ does not perceive them, he has a tongue and there are tastes, but the organ does not perceive them; he has a body and there are tangibles, but the organ does not perceive them. This is for me evidence that there is neither another world, nor rebirth other than of parents, nor fruit or result of deeds well or ill-done.

Says Prof. Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya, "All these give us some idea of how our ancient materialists argued their case. A modern materialist would not of course take resort to such crude demonstrations in support of his thesis. He has an immeasurably vast stock of scientific data to substantiate his materialistic outlook, i.e., his materialism has become immeasurably richer by the accumulation of knowledge from the progress of science. What is still of decisive significance about our early materialists is that they—in their own way and in spite of inadequate scientific data—succeeded in defending those elemental truths which were sought to be obscured by the increasing prestige of spiritualism and idealism."

Buddhism and Atheism

The first principle of Buddhism, according to the Sermon at Benaras, is–Suffering. It is one of the 'four noble truths' (आर्य सत्य), others being– (2) Thirst or lust is the cause of birth or suffering (3) The extinction of this thirst by complete annihilation of desire is possible, (4) The path which leads to the extinction of suffering is Eight fold path, to wit : right faith, right resolve, right speech, right action, right living, right effort, right thought, right self-concentration.

In principle, this is Buddhism. The Buddha does not say that god causes suffering. He does not say that to get rid of the suffering, one should believe in god or worship him. He does not take the name of god even once. It is clear that in his scheme of things there is no relevance of god at all.

The Buddha does believe in the retribution of deeds. But, as Vallee Poussin says, "as a general rule, retribution for deeds is believed to operate automatically by reason of an energy called the 'indestructible' (the 'invisible', अदृष्ट of the Brahminical treatises), and the system is therefore atheistic because it does away with the thought of a Personal Being who would scrutinise 'the book of debts', of which their treatises speak."[1]

The Buddha was particularly interested in working out a practical programme for the emancipation of mankind from suffering. Even then he considered it useless for his disciples to discuss anything about god. It means that he was personally convinced of the non-existence of god.

In the Buddhacharita, Ashvaghosha describes the Buddha as explaining why the admission of god is meaningless.

ऐश्वर्यं चेदिदं विश्वं भवेन्नेत्थं व्यवस्थितम्,
दुःखैर्नाभिभवेत् कश्चित्, नानायोनीर्न संस्पृशेत्. 20
इष्टानिष्टेषु किञ्चिन्न सम्भवेदथ देहिनः,
यदि चास्य भवेत् किञ्चिदीश्वरस्यापि तद् भवेत्. 21
अन्यप्रेरित ईशोऽयं विदधाति न स्वेच्छया,
अनवस्था ततस्तस्माज्जगत्कर्ता न सिध्यति. 28

1. *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, II, 183*

संकल्पेन विनैवेशः कुरुते चेदहैतुकीम्,
बालवत् परमेशस्य नाधिकारः स्वचेतसि. 24
ईश्वरो यदि सत्यं चेत् संदेहोऽत्र कथं भवेत्,
नापवदेद् विपत्तौ च नान्यान् देवांश्च पूजयेत्. 22
एवं परस्परं दोषदुष्टा ईश्वरसिद्धयः. 22[1]

"If the world had been made by Īśvara, there should be no change or destruction, there should be no such thing as sorrow and calamity, as right or wrong, seeing that all things, pure and impure, must come from Him.

"If sorrow and joy, love and hate, which spring up in all conscious beings, be the work of God, He Himself must be capable of sorrow and joy, love and hatred, and if He has these, how can He be said to be perfect?

"If Īśvara be the maker, and if all things have to submit silently to their maker's power, what would be the use of practising virtue? The doing of right or wrong would be the same, as all deeds are His making and must be the same with their maker.

"But if sorrow and suffering are attributed to another cause, then there would be something of which God is not the cause. Why, then, should not all that exists be uncaused too?

"Again, if God be the maker, He acts either with or without purpose. If He acts with a purpose, He cannot be said to be all perfect, for a purpose necessarily implies satisfaction of a want. If He acts without a purpose, He must be like the lunatic or suckling babe.

"Besides, if God be the maker, why should not people reverentially submit to Him, why should they offer supplications to Him when solely pressed by necessity?

"And why should people adore more gods than one?

Thus, the idea of God is proved false by rational argument, and all such contradictory assertions should be exposed."[2]

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1. *The Buddha Charitam of Ashvaghosha is incomplete because cantoes from 14 to 28 are missing in the original. There are only translations in Chinese and Tibetan of that protion which was translated into English by Dr. E.H. Johnston. On the basis of that the contoes were rewritten in Sanskrit by Mahant Ramachandradass and Swami Dwarikadass. We have given the version of the later here.*
2. *Asvaghoṣa, Buddhacarita, Quoted by Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy, Vol. I, p. 456n.*

These arguments against the possible existence of God are, compared to what we come across in the writings of the later Buddhist philosophers, quite simple. For more complex arguments of a later Buddhist philosopher, one can refer to Shantarakshita.

Says Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya, 'Proportionate to the simplicity of the theistic belief of his age, the Buddha's own atheistic arguments were quite simple. But the theists themselves did not remain at such a simple stage of a belief in god, nor did the later Buddhist philosophers remain satisfied with the somewhat common-sense considerations against the possible admission of god. True to the original teachings of the Buddha, they remained committed to the rejection of the idea of god, though, for the purpose of this rejection, they had to evolve more and more philosophically sophisticated arguments particularly for the purpose of meeting the later and philosophically sounder defence of the theistic position.[1]

1. *Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya, Indian Atheism, 1969, p. 104*

Ambedkar and Atheism

Babasaheb Ambedkar was an atheist because his dhamma or Sad-dhamma has all the key ingredients of atheism such as rejection of the supernatural and the existence of god and soul; disbelief in the efficacy of sacrifices and the infallibility of religious books and the necessity of Reason (Prajna).

He writes in his *magnum opus* 'The Buddha and His Dhamma' as under :

Belief in the Supernatural is Not–Dhamma

Whenever any phenomenon occurs, humanity is always wanting to know how it has happened, what is the cause of it. Sometimes cause and the effect are so proximate and so close that it is not difficult to account for the occurrence of the event. But oftentimes the effect is so far away from the cause for the effect is not accountable. Apparently there appears to be no cause for it. Then the question arises: How has this event occurred?

The commonest answer is that the occurrence of the event is due to some supernatural cause, which is often called a miracle. The Buddha's predecessors gave very different answers to this question. Pakudha Kacchayana denied that there was a cause for every event. Events, he said, occurred independently. Makhali Gosal admitted that an event must have a cause. But he preached that the cause is not to be found in human agency, but is to be sought in nature, necessity, inherent laws of things, predestination, or the like.

The Buddha repelled these doctrines. He maintained that not only every event has a cause but the cause is the result of some human action or natural law. His contention against the doctrine of time, nature, necessity, etc., being the cause of the occurrence of an event, was this:

If time, nature, necessity, etc., be the sole cause of the occurrence of an event, then who are we? Is man merely a puppet in the hands of time, nature, chance, gods, fate, necessity? What is the use of man's existence, if he is not free? What is the use of man's intelligence, if he continues to believe in supernatural causes?

If man is free, then every event must be the result of man's action, or of an act of Nature. There cannot be any event which is supernatural in its origin. It may be that man is not able to discover the real cause of the occurrence of an event. But if he has intelligence, he is bound one day to discover it.

In repudiating supernaturalism, the Buddha had three objects. His first object was to lead man to the path of rationalism. His second object was to free man to go in search of truth. His third object was to remove the most potent source of superstition, the result of which is to kill the spirit of inquiry.

20. This is called the law of kamma or causation. This doctrine of kamma and causation is the most central doctrine in Buddhism. It preaches rationalism and *Buddhism is nothing if not rationalism*.

That is why worship of the supernatural is not Dhamma.

Belief in Ishwara (God) is Not Essentially Part of Dhamma

Who created the world is a common question. That the world was created by God is also a very common answer. In the Brahmanic scheme this God is called by a variety of names: Pajapati, Ishwar, Brahma, or Maha Brahma.

To the question who this God is and how He came into being, there is no answer.

Those who believe in God describe Him as a being who is omnipotent, i.e., all-powerful; Omni-present, i.e., he fills the whole universe; and Omniscient, i.e., he knows everything. There are also certain moral qualities which are attributed to God. God is said to be good, God is said to be just, and God is said to be all-loving.

The question is, did the Blessed Lord accept God as the creator of the universe. The answer is, "No." He did not.

There are various grounds why he rejected the doctrine of the existence of God. Nobody has seen God. People only speak of God. God is unknown and unseen. Nobody can prove that God has created the world. The world has evolved and is not created. What advantage can there be in believing in God? It is unprofitable.

The Buddha said that a religion based on God is based on speculation. A religion based on God is, therefore, not worth having. It only ends in creating superstition.

The Buddha did not leave the question there. He discussed the question in its various aspects. The grounds on which he rejected the doctrine were various. He argued that the doctrine of the existence of God is not based on truth. This he made clear in his dialogue with the two Brahmanas, Vasettha and Bharadvaja.

Now a dispute arose between them as to which was the true path of salvation and which false. About the time the Blessed One was journeying through Kosala with a great company of the brethren, he happened to halt at the Brahmin village called Manaskata, and stayed in the mango grove on the bank of the river Akiravati. Manaskata was the town in which Vasettha and Bharadvaja lived. Having heard that the Blessed Lord was staying in their town, they went to him, and each one put forth his point of view.

Bharadvaja said: "The path of Tarukkha is the straight path, this is the direct way which makes for salvation and leads him who acts according to it into a state of union with Brahma."

Vasettha said: "Various Brahmanas, O, Gotama, teach various paths. The Addhariya Brahmanas, the Tittiriya Brahmanas, the Kanchoka Brahmanas, the Bheehuvargiya Brahmanas. They all lead those who act according to them, into a state of union with Brahma.

"Just as near a village or a town there are many and various paths, yet they all meet together in the village, just in the same way all the various paths taught by the various Brahmins lead to union with Brahma."

"Do you say that they all lead aright, Vasettha?" asked the Buddha. "I say so, Gotama," replied Vasettha.

"But Vasettha, is there a single one of the Brahmins versed in the three Vedas who has ever seen Brahma face to face?"

"No indeed, Gotama."

"Is there a single one of the teachers of the Brahmins versed in the three Vedas who has seen Brahma face to face?"

"No indeed, Gotama."

"Nobody has seen Brahma. There is no perceptual knowledge about Brahma." "So it is" said Vasettha. "How then can you believe that the assertion of the Brahmins that Brahma exists is based on truth?

"Just, Vasettha, as when a string of blind men are clinging one to the other, neither can the foremost see nor can the middle one see nor

can the hindmost see–just even so, methinks, Vasettha, is the talk of the Brahmins nothing but blind talk. The first sees not, the middle one sees not, nor can the latest one. The talk of these Brahmins turns out to be ridiculous, mere words, a vain and empty thing.

"Is this not a case, Vasettha, of a man falling in love with a woman whom he has not seen?" "Yes, it is," replied Vasettha.

"Now what think you, Vasettha? If people should ask you, 'Well! Good friend! This most beautiful woman in the land, whom you thus love and long for, who is she? Is she a noble lady, or a Brahmin woman, or of the trader class, or a Shudra?'

"With regard to the origin of Maha Brahma, the so-called creator," the Blessed Lord said, addressing Bharadvaja and Vasettha, "Friends, that being who was first born thinks thus: I am Brahma, the Great Brahma, the Vanquisher, the Unvanquished, the All-seeing, the Disposer, the Lord, the Maker, the Creator, the Chief, the Assignor, the Master of Myself, the father of all that are and are to be. By me are these beings created. "This means that Brahma is the father of those that are and are to be.

"You say that the worshipful Brahma, the Vanquisher, the Unvanquished, Father of all that are and are to be, he by whom we were created, he is permanent, constant, eternal, unchanging, and he will remain so for ever and ever. Then why are we who are created by that Brahma, have come hither, all impermanent, transient, unstable, short-lived, destined to pass away?"

To this Vasettha had no answer.

His third argument had reference to the omnipotence of God. "If God is omnipotent and is also the efficient cause of creation, then because of this man cannot have any desire to do anything, nor can there be any necessity to do anything, nor can he have the will to do anything or to put forth any effort. Man must remain a passive creature, with no part to play in the affairs of the world. If this is so, why did Brahma create man at all?"

To this also Vasettha had no answer.

His fourth argument was that if God is good, then why do men become murderers, thieves, unchaste, liars, slanderers, abusive babblers, covetous, malicious and perverse? The cause of this must be Ishwara. Is this possible with the existence of God who is good?

His fifth argument was related to God being omniscient, just, and merciful. "If there is a supreme creator who is just and merciful, why then does so much injustice prevail in the world?" asked the Blessed Lord. "He who has eyes can see the sickening sight; why does not Brahma set his creatures right? If his power is so wide that no limits can restrain, why is his hand so rarely spread to bless? Why are his creatures all condemned to suffering? Why does he not give happiness to all? Why do fraud, lies, and ignorance prevail? Why does falsehood triumph over truth? Why does truth and justice fail? I count your Brahma as one of the most unjust, who made a world only to shelter wrong.

"If there exists some Lord all-powerful to fulfil in every creature, bliss or woe, and action good or ill, then that Lord is stained with sin. Either man does not work his will, or God is not just and good, or God is blind."

His next argument against the doctrine of God was that the discussion of this question about the existence of God was unprofitable.

According to him, the centre of religion lay not in the relation of man to God. It lay in the relation between man and man. The purpose of religion is to teach man how he should behave towards other men so that all may be happy.

There was also another reason why the Blessed Lord was against belief in the existence of God. He was against religious rites, ceremonies and observances. He was against them because they were the home of superstition, and superstition was the enemy of *samma ditthi*, the most important element in his *Ashtangamarga*.

To the Blessed Lord, belief in God was the most dangerous thing. For belief in God gave rise to belief in the efficacy of worship and prayer; and the efficacy of worship and prayer gave rise to the office of the priest; and the priest was the evil genius who created all superstition, and thereby destroyed the growth of *samma ditthi*.

Of these arguments against belief in the existence of God, some were practical, but the majority of them theological. The Blessed Lord knew that they were not fatal to the belief in the existence of God.

It must not, however, be supposed that he had no argument which was fatal. There was one which he advanced which is beyond doubt fatal to belief in God. This is contained in his doctrine of *patiecasamuppada*, which is described as the doctrine of dependent origination.

According to this doctrine, the question whether God exists or does not exist is not the main question. Nor is the question whether God created the universe the real question. The real question is, how did the creator create the world? The justification for the belief in God is a conclusion which follows from our answer to the question, how was the world created? The important question is: Did God create something out of nothing, or did he create something out of something?

It is impossible to believe that something could have been created out of nothing. If the so-called God has created something out of something, then that something out of which something new was created has been in existence before he created anything. God cannot therefore be called the Creator of that something which has existed before him.

If something has been created by somebody out of something before God created anything, then God cannot be said to be the Creator or the first Cause.

Such was his last but incontrovertible argument against belief in the existence of God. Being false in premises, belief in God as the creator of the universe is not Dhamma. It is only belief in falsehood.

Dhamma based on Union with Brahma is a False Dhamma

When the Buddha was preaching his religion, there was current a doctrine called Vedantism. The tenets of this doctrine are few and simple. Behind the universe there is omnipresent a common principle of life called Brahma or Brahman. This Brahma is a reality. The atman, or the individual soul, is the same as Brahma.

Man's liberation lies in making atman to be one with Brahma. This is the second principle. This unity with Brahma, the atman can achieve by realising that it is the same as Brahman. And the way to make the atman realise that it is the same as Brahmana, is to give up *sansara*. This doctrine is called Vedantism.

The Buddha had no respect for the doctrine. He regarded it as based on false premises and producing nothing of value, and therefore not worth having. This he made clear in his discussion with two Brahmanas, Bharadvaja and Vasettha.

The Buddha argued that there must be proof before one can accept a thing to be a reality. There are two modes of proof, perception and inference.

The Buddha asked, "Has anybody perceived Brahma; have you seen Brahma; have you spoken to Brahma; have you smelt Brahma?"

Vasettha said, "No."

"The other mode of proof is inadequate to prove the existence of Brahma. From what is Brahma the inference of ?" asked the Buddha. There again was no answer.

There are others who argue that a thing exists although it is invisible. So they say that Brahma exists, although it is invisible. In this bald statement, it is an impossible position. But for argument's sake, let it be granted that a thing exists although it is invisible. The best illustration of it is electricity. It exists although it is invisible. This argument is not enough. An invisible thing must show itself in some other form that is visible. Then alone it can be called real.

But if an invisible thing does not show itself in any visible form then it is not a reality. We accept the reality of electricity, although it is invisible, because of the results it produces. Electricity produces light. From light we accept the reality of electricity, although it is invisible. What does this invisible Brahma produce? Does it produce any visible results?

The answer is in the negative.

Another illustration may be given. In law too, it is common to adopt as a basic concept a fiction, a proposition the existence of which is not proved, but which is assumed to be true. And we all accept such a legal fiction. But why is such a legal fiction accepted? The reason is that a legal fiction is accepted because it gives a fruitful and just result.

"Brahma is a fiction. What fruitful result does it give?"

Vasettha and Bharadvaja were silent.

To drive the argument home he turned to Vasettha and asked "Have you seen Brahma? Is there a single one of the Brahmins versed in three Vedas who has ever seen Brahma face to face?"

"No indeed, Gotama."

"Is there a single one of the teachers of the Brahmins versed in the three Vedas who have seen Brahma face to face?"

"No indeed, Gotama."

"Is there, Vasettha, a single one of the Brahmins up to the seventh generation who has seen Brahma face to face?"

"No indeed, Gotama."

"Well then, Vasettha, did the ancient rishis of the Brahmanas, did even they speak thus, saying: We know it, we have seen it, where Brahma is, whither Brahma is?"

"Not so, Gotama."

The Buddha continued his questioning of the two Brahmin boys and said: "Now what think you, Vasettha? Does it not follow, this being so, that the talk of the Brahmins about union with Brahma turns out to be foolish talk? Just, Vasettha, as when a string of blind men are clinging one to the other, neither can the foremost see, nor can the middle one see, nor can the hindmost see, just even so, methinks, Vasettha, is the talk of the Brahmins all but blind talk? The first sees not, the middle one sees not, nor can the last one. The talk of these Brahmins turns out to be ridiculous, mere words, a vain and empty thing. Just, Vasettha, as if a man should say, 'How I long for, how I love the most beautiful woman in this land.' And people should ask him, 'Well! good friend! This most beautiful woman in the land, whom you thus love and long for, do you know whether that beautiful woman is a noble lady or a Brahmin woman, or of the trader class, or a Sudra?' But when so asked, he would answer: 'No.'

And when people should ask him, ' Well! good friend! This most beautiful woman in all the land, whom you love and long for, do you know what the name of that most beautiful woman is, or what her family name, whether she be tall or short or of medium height, dark or brunette or golden in colour, or in what village or town or city she dwells?' But when so asked, he would answer, 'No.'

Now what think you, Vasettha? Would it not turn out that being so, that the talk of that man was foolish talk?"

"In sooth, Gotama, that would be so," said the two Brahmanas.

So Brahma is not real and any religion based upon it is useless.

Belief in Soul is Not Dhamma

The Buddha said that religion based on soul is based on speculation.

Nobody has seen the soul or has conversed with the soul. The soul is unknown and unseen. The thing that exists is not the soul but the mind. Mind is different from the soul. Belief in soul he said is unprofitable.

A religion based on soul is therefore not worth having. It only ends in creating superstition.

The Buddha did not leave the question there. He discussed it in all its aspects. Belief in the existence of soul is as common as the belief in the existence of God. Belief in the existence of soul was also a part of the Brahmanic religion.

In the Brahmanic religion the soul is called *atma* or *atman*. In the Brahmanic religion, atman is the name given to an entity which was held to be abiding separate from the body, but living inside the body, constantly existing from the moment of his birth. Belief in the soul included other beliefs, connected with it. The soul does not die with the body. It takes birth in another body when it comes into being. The body serves as an external clothing for the soul.

Did the Buddha believe in the soul? No. He did not. His doctrine about the soul is called *an-atta*, no soul.

Given a disembodied soul, various questions arise: What is the soul? Where did it come from? What becomes of it on the death of the body? Where does it go? In what form does it exist "hereafter"? How long does it remain there? These questions the Buddha tried to argue out with the upholders of the doctrine of the soul. He first tried to show how vague was the idea about the soul, by his usual method of cross examination.

He asked those who believed in the existence of the soul, what the soul was like in size and in shape. To Ananda he said, "The declarations concerning the soul are abounding. Some declare: 'My soul has a form and it is minute.' Others declare the soul to have form and to be boundless and minute. Others declare it to be formless and boundless. "In so many ways, Ananda, are declarations made concerning the soul."

"How is the soul conceived by those who believe in the soul?" was another question raised by the Buddha. Some say, "My soul is feeling." Others say, "Nay, my soul is not feeling, my soul is not sentient"; or again: "Nay, my soul is not feeling, nor is it non-sentient; my soul has feeling, it has the property of sentience." Under such aspects as these is the soul conceived.

The Buddha next asked those who believed in the existence of the soul, as to the condition of the soul after the death of the body. He also raised the question whether the soul was visible after the death of the body. He found infinite number of vague statements. Does the soul

keep its form after the death of the body? He found that there were eight different speculations. Does the soul die with the body? There were innumerable speculations on this.

He also raised the question of the happiness or misery of the soul after the body is dead. Is the soul happy after the death of the body? On this also the recluses and Brahmins differed. Some said it was altogether miserable. Some said it was happy. Some said it. is both happy and miserable and some said it is neither happy nor miserable.

His answer to all these theories about the existence of the soul was the same which he gave to Cunda.

To Cunda he said, "Now, Cunda, to those recluses and Brahmanas, who believe and profess any one of these views, I go and say this: 'Is this so, friends?' And if they reply: 'Yes. This alone is true, any other view is absurd,' I do not admit their claim. Why is this? Because persons hold different opinions on such questions. Nor do I consider this (or that) view on a level with my own, let alone higher."

Now the more important question is, what were the arguments of the Buddha against the existence of the soul. The general arguments he advanced in support of his denial of the soul were the same as those which he advanced in support of his denial of the existence of God. He argued that the discussion of the existence of the soul is as unprofitable as the discussion of the existence of God. He argued that the belief in the existence of the soul is as much against the cultivation of samma ditthi as the belief in the existence of God. He argued that the belief in the existence of the soul is as much a source of superstition as the belief in God is. Indeed, in his opinion the belief in the existence of a soul is far more dangerous than the belief in God. For not only does it create a priesthood, not only is it the origin of all superstition, but it gives the priesthood complete control over man from birth to death. Because of these general arguments, it is said that the Buddha did not express any definite opinion on the existence of the soul. Others have said that he did not repudiate the theory of the existence of the soul. Others have said that he was always dodging the issue.

These statements are quite incorrect. For to Mahali he did tell in most positive terms that there is no such thing as a soul. That is why his theory of the soul is called anatta, i.e., non-soul. Apart from the general arguments against the existence of the soul, the Buddha had a special

argument against the existence of the soul which he regarded as fatal to the theory of the soul. His theory against the existence of the soul as a separate entity is called *nama-rupa*.

The theory is the result of the application of the *vibhajja* test, of sharp, rigorous analysis, of the constituent elements of sentient being, otherwise called human personality. Nama-Rupa is a collective name for a sentient being.

According to the Buddha's analysis, a sentient being is a compound thing consisting of certain physical elements and certain mental elements. They are called *khandas*.

The *rupa khanda* primarily consists of the physical elements such as earth, water, fire, and air. They constitute the body or rupa. Besides rupa khanda, there is such a thing as *nama khanda*, which goes to make up a sentient being. This nama khanda is called *vinana*, or consciousness. This nama khanda includes the three mental elements: *vedana* (sensation springing from contact of the six senses with the world); *sanna* (perception); *sankhara* (states of mind). *Chetana* (consciousness) is sometimes spoken of along with the three other mental states as being one of them. A modern psychologist would say that consciousness is the mainspring from which other psychological phenomena arise. Vinana is the centre of a sentient being. Consciousness is result of the combination of the four elements, *prithi*, *apa*, *tej*, and *vayu*.

An objection is raised to this theory of consciousness propounded by the Buddha.

Those who object to this theory ask, "How is consciousness produced?" It is true. that consciousness arises with birth and dies with death. All the same, can it be said that consciousness is the result of the combination of the four elements?

The Buddha's answer was not that the coexistence or aggregation of the physical elements produces consciousness. What the Buddha said was that wherever there was *rupa* or *kaya*, there was consciousness accompanying it.

To give an analogy from science, there is an electric field, and wherever there is an electric field it is always accompanied by a magnetic field. No one knows how the magnetic field is created, or how it arises. But it always exists along with the electric field.

Why should not the same relationship be said to exist between body and consciousness? The magnetic field in relation to the electric field is called an induced field. Why cannot consciousness be called an induced field in relation to rupa-kaya?

The Buddha's argument against the soul is not yet complete. He had further to say something of importance. Once consciousness arises, man becomes a sentient being. Consciousness is, therefore, the chief thing in man's life. Consciousness is cognitive, emotional, and volitional. Consciousness is cognitive when it gives knowledge, information as appreciating or apprehending, whether it be appreciation of internal facts or of external things and events. Consciousness is emotional when it exists in certain subjective states, characterised by either pleasurable or painful tones, when emotional consciousness produces feeling. Consciousness in its volitional stage makes a being exert himself for the attainment of some end. Volitional consciousness gives rise to what we call will or activity. It is thus clear that all the functions of a sentient being are performed by the sentient being through and as a result of consciousness.

After this analysis, the Buddha asked what are the functions which are left to be performed by the soul? All functions assigned to the soul are performed by consciousness. A soul without any function is an absurdity.

This is how the Buddha disproved the existence of the soul. That is why belief in the existence of the soul cannot be a part of Dhamma.

Belief in Sacrifices is Not–Dhamma

(i)

The Brahmanic religion was based upon sacrifices.

Some sacrifices were classified as *nittya* and other sacrifices were classified as *naimitik*. The nittya sacrifices were obligations and had to be performed whether one got any fruit therefrom or not. The *naimittitik* sacrifices were performed when the performer wanted to gain something by way of worldly advantage.

The *Brahmanic* sacrifices involved drinking, killing animals and merry-making. Yet these sacrifices were held as religious observances.

The Buddha declined to regard a religion based on sacrifices as worth having. He has given his reasons to many a Brahmin who

went to have a controversy with him as to why sacrifices were not part of religion.

It is reported that there were three Brahmins who had a controversy with him on the subject. They were Kutadanta, Ujjaya, and the third was Udai. Kutadanta the Brahmin requested the Blessed One to tell him what he thought about the value of a sacrifice.

The Blessed One said, "Well then, O, Brahmana, give ear and listen attentively and I will speak."

"Very well, sir, " said Kutadanta in reply; and the Blessed One spoke as follows:

"Long ago, O, Brahmana, there was a king by name Mahavijeta, mighty, with great wealth and large property; with stores of silver and gold, of aids to enjoyment, of goods and corn; with his treasure-houses and his garners full. Now when King Mahavijeta was once sitting alone in meditation he became anxious at the thought: 'I have in abundance all the good things a mortal can enjoy. The whole wide circle of the earth is mine by conquest to possess. It were well if I were to offer a great sacrifice that should ensure me weal and welfare for many days.'

Thereupon the Brahmin who was chaplain said to the king, 'The king's country, sire, is harassed and harried. There are dacoits abroad who pillage the villages and townships and who make the roads unsafe. Were the king, so long as that is so, to levy a fresh tax, verily his majesty would be acting wrongly.

"'But perchance his majesty might think: 'I'll soon put a stop to these scoundrels' game by degradation and banishment, and fines and bonds and death!' But their licence cannot be satisfactorily put a stop to. The remnant left unpunished would still go on harassing the realm.

"'Now there is one method to adopt to put a thorough end to this disorder. Whosoever there be in the king's realm who devote themselves to keeping cattle and the farm, to them let His Majesty the King give food and seed-corn. Whosoever there be in the king's realm who devote themselves to trade, to them let His Majesty the King give capital. Whosoever there be in the king's realm who devote themselves to government service, to them let His Majesty the King give wages and food.

"'Then those men, following each his own business, will no longer harass the realm; the king's revenue will go up; the country will be quiet and

at peace; and the populace, pleased one with another and happy, dancing their children in their arms, will dwell with open doors without fear.'

"Then King Mahavijeta, O, Brahmana, accepted the word of his chaplain, and did as he had said. And those men, following each his business, harassed the realm no more. And the king's revenue went up. And the country became quiet and at peace. And the populace, pleased one with another and happy, dancing their children in their arms, dwelt with open doors.

"When peace and order was restored, King Mahavijeta had his chaplain called again and said, 'The disorder is at an end. The country is at peace. I want to offer that great sacrifice, let the venerable one instruct me how, for my weal and my welfare for many days.'

"The chaplain, replying to the king, said, 'Be it so. Let His Majesty the King send invitations to those in the town and the country in his realm who are Kshatriyas, vassals of his; who are ministers and officials of his, or who are Brahmins of position, or who are householders of substance, saying: 'I intend to offer a great sacrifice. Let the venerable ones give their sanction to what will be to me for weal and welfare for many days.'

"Then the king, O, Brahmin Kutadanta, accepted the word of his chaplain, and did as he had said. And they each, Kshatriya and Ministers and Brahmins and householders, made a like reply: 'Let His Majesty the King celebrate the sacrifice. The time is suitable, O, King!'

"King Mahavijeta was wise and gifted in many ways. And his chaplain was equally wise and gifted. The chaplain, O, Brahmana, before the sacrifice had begun, explained to the king what it would involve.

"'Should His Majesty the King, before starting on the great sacrifice or whilst he is offering the great sacrifice, or when the great sacrifice has been offered, feel any such regret as: 'Great alas, has been the portion of my wealth used up herein,' let not the king harbour such regret.

"And further, O, Brahmana, the chaplain, before the sacrifice had begun, in order to prevent any compunction that might afterwards arise as regards those who had taken part therein, said, 'Now there will come to your sacrifice, sire, men who destroy the life of living things, and men who refrain therefrom; men who take what has not been given, and men who refrain therefrom; men who act evilly in respect of lusts, and men who refrain therefrom; men who speak lies, and men who do not; men

who slander, and men who do not; men who speak rudely, and men who do not; men who chatter vain things, and men who refrain therefrom; men who covet, and men who covet not; men who harbour ill will, and men who harbour it not; men whose views are wrong, and men whose views are right. Of each of these, let them who do evil, alone with their evil. For them who do well, let Your Majesty offer; for them, sire, arrange the rites; them let the king gratify, in them shall your heart within find peace.'

"And further, O, Brahmana, at that sacrifice neither were any oxen slain, neither goats, nor fowls, nor fatted pigs, nor were any kinds of living creatures put to death. No trees were cut down to be used as posts, no *dabbha* grasses mown to strew around the sacrificial spot. And the slaves and messengers and workmen there employed were driven neither by rods nor fear, nor carried on their work weeping with tears upon their faces. Whoso chose to help, he worked; who so chose not to help, worked not. What each chose to do, he did; what they chose not to do, that was left undone. With ghee, and oil and butter, and milk and honey, and sugar only was that sacrifice accomplished.

"Let your sacrifice be such as that of King Mahavijeta, if you at all wish to perform any sacrifice. Sacrifices are a waste. Animal sacrifices are cruelties. Sacrifices cannot be part of religion. It is a worst form of religion which says you can go to heaven by killing an animal."

I was inclined to ask "Is there, O, Gotama, any other sacrifice with more fruit and more advantage than killing animals?"

"Yes, O, Brahmana, there is."

"And what, O Gotama, may that be? "When a man with trusting heart takes upon himself the precepts, abstinence from destroying life; abstinence from taking what has not been given; abstinence from evil conduct in respect of lusts; abstinence from lying words; abstinence from strong, intoxicating, maddening drinks, the root of carelessness– that is a sacrifice better than open largesse, better than perpetual alms, better than the gift of dwelling places, better than accepting guidance."

And when he had thus spoken, Kutadanta the Brahmin said to the Blessed One: "Most excellent, O Gotama, are the words of thy mouth, most excellent."

(ii)

Now the Brahmin Ujjaya said this to the Exalted One: "Pray, does the worthy Gotama praise sacrifice?"

"No, Brahmana, I do not praise every sacrifice. Yet I would not withhold praise from every sacrifice. In whatever sacrifice, Brahmana, cows are slaughtered, goats and sheep are slaughtered, poultry and pigs are slaughtered, and diverse living creatures come to destruction, such sacrifice, Brahmana, which involves butchery, I do not praise." "Why so?"

"To such a sacrifice, Brahmana, involving butchery, neither the worthy ones nor those who have entered on the worthy way draw near. "But in whatever sacrifice Brahmana, cows are not slaughtered, and living creatures come not to destruction, such sacrifice not involving butchery, I do praise, such as, for instance, a long-established charity, an oblation for the welfare of the family."

"Why so?" "Because, Brahmana, the worthy ones, those who have entered on the worthy way, do draw near to such a sacrifice which involves not butchery."

(iii)

The Brahmin Udai asked the same question to the Exalted One as was asked by the Brahmin Ujjaya: "Pray, does the worthy Gotama praise sacrifice?" The Buddha gave the same answer which he gave to Ujjaya.

He said:

"Fit sacrifice performed in season due
And free from cruelty, to such draw near
Those well trained in the good-life, even those
Who have the veil rolled back while (yet on earth),
Who have transcended time and going.
Such do the enlightened praise, those skilled in merit.
Whether in sacrifice or act of faith,
Oblation fitly made with heart devout
To that good field of Merit, those who live
The good–life, sacrificed, conferred, so given
Lavish the offering; devas therewith are pleased.
Thus offering, the thoughtful, thereby becoming wise,
Wins the blissful world from suffering free."

Belief Based on Speculation is Not–Dhamma

(i)

It was usual to ask such questions as: (1) Was I in ages past? (2) Was I not in ages past? (3) What was I then? (4) From what did I

pass to what? (5) Shall I be in ages to come? (6) Shall I not be in ages to come? (7) What shall I then be? (8) How shall I then be ? (9) From what shall I pass to what? Or, again, it is Self today about which he is in doubt, asking himself–(1) Am I? (2) Am I not? (3) What am I? (4) How am I? (5) Whence came my being? (6) Whither will it pass?"

As regards the Universe various questions were raised. Some of them were as follows: "How was the Universe created? Is it everlasting?"

In answer to the first question, some said everything was created by Brahma; others said it was created by Pajapati. In answer to the second question, some said it was everlasting. Others said it was not. Some said it was finite. Others said it was infinite.

These questions the Buddha refused to entertain. He said that they could only be asked and entertained by wrong-headed people. To answer these questions required omniscience which nobody had. He said that he was not omniscient enough to answer these questions. No one could claim to know all that is to be known; nor what we wish to know at any time is known at the time. There is always something that is unknown.

It is for these reasons that the Buddha excluded such doctrines from his religion. He regarded a religion which made such doctrines a part of it as a religion not worth having.

(ii)

The doctrines with which the contemporaries of the Buddha had made the basis of their religion were concerned with (1) Self; and (2) the origin of the Universe.

They raised certain questions about the self. They asked: "(1) Was I in ages past? (2) Was I not in ages past? (3) What was I then? (4) From what did I pass to what? (5) Shall I be in ages to come? (6) Shall I not be in ages to come? (7) What shall I then be? (8) How shall I then be? (9) From what shall I pass to what? Or, again, it is Self today about which he is in doubt, asking himself–(1) Am I? (2) Am I not? (3) What am I? (4) How am I? (5) Whence came my being? (6) Whither will it pass?"

Others raised the question regarding the origin of the Universe. Some said it was created by Brahma. Others said it was created by Pajapati sacrificing himself.

Other teachers had other questions to raise: "The world is everlasting; the world is not everlasting; the world is finite; the world

is infinite; the body is the life (*jiva*); the body is the one thing and the life another; truth-finder exists after death; a truth-finder does not exist after death; he both exists and does not exist after death; he neither exists nor does not exist after death."

These were questions which the Buddha said could be asked by wrong-headed persons. There were three reasons why the Buddha condemned these religious theories. In the first place, there was no reason to make them part of religion. In the second place, to answer these questions required omniscience, which nobody had. He emphasised this in his addresses. He said that at one and the same time, no one can know and see everything. Knowledge is never final. There is always something more to be known. The third argument against these theories was that they were merely speculative. They are not verified, nor are they verifiable.

They were the result of imagination let loose. There was no reality behind them. Besides, of what good were these speculative theories to man in his relation to men? None whatever. The Buddha did not believe that the world was created. He believed that the world had evolved.

Reading Books of Dhamma is Not–Dhamma

The Brahmins put all their emphasis upon knowledge. They taught that knowledge was the be-all and end-all of everything. Nothing further was to be considered.

The Buddha was on the other hand an upholder of education for all. Besides, he was more concerned with the use of knowledge a man is likely to make, than with knowledge itself.

Consequently he was very particular to emphasise that he who has knowledge must have *Sila* (virtue), and that knowledge without Sila was most dangerous. The importance of Sila, as against *Prajna*, is well illustrated by what he told the bhikkhu Patisena.

In olden times when Buddha was residing at Savatthi, there was an old mendicant called Patisena who, being by nature cross and dull, could not learn so much as one *gatha* by heart. The Buddha accordingly ordered five hundred arhatas day by day to instruct him, but after three years he still was unable to remember even one gatha. Then all the peoples of the country (the four orders of people), knowing his ignorance, began to ridicule him, on which the Buddha, pitying his case, called him to his side, and gently repeated

the following stanza: "He who guards his mouth, and restrains his thoughts, he who offends not with his body, the man who acts thus shall obtain deliverance."

Then Patisena, moved by a sense of the Master's goodness to him, felt his heart opened, and once he repeated the stanza. The Buddha then addressed him further: "You now, an old man, can repeat a stanza only, and men know this, and they will still ridicule you; therefore I will now explain the meaning of the verse to you, and do you on your part attentively listen."

Then the Buddha declared the three causes connected with the body, the four connected with the mouth, and the three connected with the thoughts, by destroying which men might obtain deliverance; on which the mendicant, fully realizing the truth thus explained, obtained the condition of an arhata.

Now at this time, there were five hundred bhikkhunis dwelling in their vihara, who sent one of their number to the Buddha to request him to send them a priest to instruct them in the Dhamma. On hearing their request, the Buddha desired the old mendicant Patisena to go to them for this purpose.

On knowing that this arrangement had been made, all the nuns began to laugh together, and agreed on the morrow, when he came, to say the gatha wrong (backward), and so confuse the old man and put him to shame.

Then on the morrow when he came, all the bhikkhunis, great and small, went forth to salute him and as they did so, they looked at one another and smiled.

Then sitting down, they offered him food. Having eaten and washed his hands, they then begged him to begin his sermon. On which the aged mendicant ascended the elevated seat, and sitting down, began:

"Sisters! My talent is small, my learning is very little. I know only one gatha, but I will repeat that and explain its meaning. Do you listen with attention and understand."

Then all the young nuns began to attempt to say the gatha backwards; but lo! they could not open their mouths; and filled with shame, they hung down their heads in sorrow.

Then Patisena, having repeated the gatha, began to explain it, as the Buddha instructed him. Then all the bhikkhunis, hearing his words,

were filled with surprise; and rejoicing to hear such instruction, with one heart they received it, and became arhatas.

On the day after this, the King Pasenadi invited the Buddha and the whole congregation of priests to assemble at his palace to partake of hospitality. The Buddha therefore, recognizing the superior and revered appearance of Patisena, desired him to bear his alms-dish and follow him as he went. But when they came to the palace gate, the porter, knowing his character (antecedents), would not let him go into the hall, saying: "We have no hospitality for a priest who knows but one gatha; there is no room for such common fellows as you; make place for your betters and begone."

Patisena accordingly sat down outside the door.

The Buddha now ascended the dais, after having washed his hands, and lo! the arm of Patisena, with the alms-dish in its hand, entered the room. Then the king, the ministers, and all the assembly, seeing this sight, were filled with astonishment, and said, "Ah! Who is this?"

On which the Buddha replied, "It is Patisena, the mendicant. He has but just obtained enlightenment, and I desired him to bear my alms-dish behind me; but the porter has refused him admission."

On this he was admitted and entered the assembly.

Then Pasenadi, turning to Buddha, said, "I hear that this Patisena is a man of small ability, and knows only one gatha; how, then, has he obtained the supreme wisdom?"

To which Buddha replied, "Learning need not be much; conduct is the first thing. "This Patisena has allowed the secret virtue of the words of this one gatha to penetrate his spirit; his body, mouth, and thoughts have obtained perfect quietude; for though a man knows ever so much, if his knowledge reaches not to his life, to deliver him from the power which leads to destruction, what benefit can all his learning be?"

Then the Buddha said:

"Although a man repeats a thousand stanzas (sections), but understands not the meaning of the lines he repeats, his performance is not equal to the repetition of one sentence well understood, which is able when heard to control thought. To repeat a thousand words without understanding, what profit is there in this? But to understand one truth and, hearing it, to act accordingly, this is to find deliverance. "A man may be able to repeat many books, but if he cannot explain them, what

profit is there in this? But to explain one sentence of the law and to walk accordingly, this is the way to find supreme wisdom."

On hearing these words, the two hundred bhikkhus, the king and his ministers were filled with joy.

Belief in the Infallibility of Books of Dhamma is Not–Dhamma

Brahmins had declared that the Vedas were not only sacred, but in point of authority they were final. Not only were the Vedas declared by the Brahmins to be final, but they were declared by them to be infallible.

The Buddha was totally opposed to the Brahmins on this point. He denied that the Vedas were sacred. He denied that whatever the Vedas said was final. He denied that the Vedas were infallible.

There were many teachers who had taken the same position as he had done. However, later on they or their followers all gave in, in order to win respect and goodwill from the Brahmins for their systems of philosophy. But the Buddha never yielded on this issue.

In the *Tvijja Sutta* the Buddha declared that the Vedas were a waterless desert, a pathless jungle, in fact, perdition. No man with intellectual and moral thirst can go to the Vedas and hope to satisfy his thirst. As to infallibility of the Vedas, he said nothing is infallible, not even the Vedas. Everything, he said, must be subject to examination and re-examination.

This he made clear in his sermon to the Kalamas. Once the Blessed One, while passing through the land of the Kosalas accompanied by a large following of disciples, came to the town of Kesaputta, which was inhabited by the Kalamas. When the Kalamas came to know of his arrival, they betook themselves thither where the Blessed One was and sat down on one side. So seated, the Kalamas of Kesaputta spoke thus to the Blessed One:

"There are, Lord, some ascetics and recluses who come to Kesaputta and who elucidate and exalt their own views, but they break up, crush down, revile, and oppose the views of others. And there be other ascetics and recluses, Lord, who come to Kesaputta, and they too expound and magnify their own beliefs, but destroy, suppress, despise, and set themselves against the beliefs of others. "And so, Lord, we are in uncertainty and doubt, knowing not which among these venerable ascetics speaks truth and which falsehood."

"Good cause, indeed, have you Kalamas to be uncertain; good cause have you to doubt," said the Blessed One. "Truly, upon just occasion has uncertainty and doubt arisen in you."

"Come, O, you Kalamas," continued the Lord, "Do not go merely by what you hear; do not go merely by what has been handed down from one to another; do not go by what is commonly reported; do not go merely by what is found written in the scriptures; do not go by subtleties of reasoning; do not go by subtleties of logic; do not go merely by considerations based upon mere appearances; do not go merely by agreeable beliefs and views; do not go merely by what looks to be genuine; do not go merely by word of some ascetic or superior."

"What, then, should we do? What test should we apply?" asked the Kalamas.

"The tests are these," replied the Blessed One. "Ask yourselves, do we know whether these things are insalutary; these things are blameworthy; these things are reprehended by the wise; these things being done or attempted lead to ill-being and to suffering?'

"Kalamas, you should go further and ask whether the doctrine taught promotes craving, hatred, delusion, and violence.

"This is not enough, Kalamas, you should go further and see whether the doctrine is not likely to make a man captive of his passions, and is not likely to lead him to kill living creatures; take what has not been given to him; go after another's wife; utter falsehood; and cause others to practise like deeds.

"And finally you should ask whether all this does not tend to his ill-being and suffering.

"Now, Kalamas, what think you?

"Do these things tend to man's ill-being or well-being?"

"To his ill-being, Lord," replied the Kalamas.

"What think you, Kalamas, are these things salutary or insalutary?"

"They are insalutary, Lord."

"Are these things blameworthy?"

"Blameworthy, Lord," replied the Kalamas.

"Reprehended by the wise, or approved by the wise?"

"Reprehended by the wise," replied the Kalamas.

"Being done or attempted, do they lead to ill-being and to suffering?"

"Done or attempted, Lord, they lead to ill-being and to suffering."

"A scripture which teaches this cannot be accepted as final or infallible?"

"No, Lord," said the Kalamas.

"But this, O, Kalamas, is just what I have said. What I have said is 'do not go merely by what you hear; do not go merely by what has been handed down from one to another; do not go merely by subtleties of reasoning; do not go by subtleties of logic; do not go by considerations based upon mere appearances; do not go merely by agreeable beliefs and views; do not go merely by the word of some ascetic or superior.

"Only when of yourselves you indeed know these things are insalutary; these things are blameworthy; these things are reprehended by the wise; these things being done or attempted lead to ill-being and to suffering, then, Kalamas, you should put them away."

"Wonderful, Lord, most wonderful! We go to Lord, the Blessed One, for refuge, and to his Teachings. As followers, Lord, may the Blessed One accept us; from this day henceforth long as life shall last, we take our refuge in you."

The substance of the argument is plain. Before you accept anybody's teachings as authoritative, do not go by the fact that it is contained in the scriptures; do not go by the subtleties of logic; do not go by considerations based upon mere appearances; do not go merely by the fact that beliefs and views preached are agreeable; do not go merely because they look to be genuine; do not go merely by the fact that the beliefs and views are those of some ascetic or superior. But consider whether the beliefs and views sought to be inculcated are salutary or insalutary, blameworthy or blameless, lead to well-being or ill-being.

It is only on these grounds that one can accept the teachings of anybody.[1]

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1. *B.R. Ambedkar, The Buddha and His Dhamma, p. 174 to 198, Samyak Prakashan edition.*

Atheism of Nyaya-Vaisheshikas

The Nyaya-Vaisheshka philosophy in its original form was consciously committed to atheism.

Nowhere in the Nyayasutra and the Vaisheshika-sutra do we find any mention of the concept of the Paramātmā. This by itself is clear evidence of the departure of the later Nyaya-Vaisheshikas from the position of Gautama and Kanada.

Gautama accepted only twelve 'objects of valid knowledge'. Apart from the self, the list of these objects mentions body, sense, objects of sense-knowledge, etc. In the other eleven 'objects of valid knowledge', there is no mention of god either directly or indirectly आत्मशरीरेन्द्रियार्थबुद्धि मनःप्रवृत्तिदोषप्रेत्यभावफलदुःखापवर्गास्तु प्रमेयम्.

(न्यायसूत्र, 1-1-9)

Likewise, nowhere in the Nyaya-sutra, Gautama spoke of worshipping god. Not only that, Atma or atma-Jnana, Veda etc. are also not mentioned in this list. According to him the highest ideal (निःश्रेयस) or liberation can be achieved by the knowledge of 16 categories, which include 'doubt', 'corroborative instance', 'inference-components', 'hypothetical arguments', etc.[1]

In the scheme of liberation, there is no god. The 2nd Sutra says–the removal of false knowledge (मिथ्या ज्ञान) leads to the removal of activity (प्रवृत्ति), the removal of activity leads to the removal of birth (जन्म), and the removal of birth leads to the removal of suffering (दुःख) and this is liberation (अपवर्ग) : दुःखजन्मप्रवृत्तिदोषमिथ्याज्ञानानामुत्तरोत्तरापाये तदनन्तरापायादपवर्गः (न्यायसूत्र, 1-1-2)

Question arises–what causes the removal of false knowledge (मिथ्याज्ञान)?. Is it worship of god or grace of god? Nothing. Gautam says–knowledge–true knowledge–alone leads to the removal of false

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1. *प्रमाणप्रमेयसंशयप्रयोजनदृष्टान्तसिद्धान्तावयवतर्कनिर्णयवादजल्पवितण्डाहेत्वाभासच्छल-जातिनिग्रहस्थानानां तत्त्वज्ञानान्निःश्रेयसाधिगमः (न्यायसूत्र 1-1-1)*

knowledge and the process thus started ultimately results in Liberation in the sense of the complete cessation of suffering.

What exactly was the nature of the knowledge that Gautama spoke of? It has nothing to do with god or his grace. He (Gautama) allowed the status of valid knowledge only to one specific form of it and this was due to the recognised forms of 'instruments of valid knowledge' (प्रमाण)[1] His commentator spoke simply of the empirical knowledge derived from the recognised instruments of valid knowledge like perception, inference, etc.

The author of the Nyaya-sutra found no place for the conception of god in his philosophy. He spoke of the self but was totally indifferent to the conception of the supreme self (परमात्मा). Hence, he never bothered to say that the worship of this supreme self was the means of reaching the highest human ideal.

As Gautama-sutras were materialistic, there was no meaning of the so-called liberation. But the sutra mentions that. That is simply to placate the orthodox sentiments of his age, as every one was talking then of liberation. This fact is admitted even by some of the traditionally oriented Indian scholars. They clearly suspect that the talk of liberation on the part of Gautama is afterall artificial.

The Nayaya-philosophers said that the Vedas were no more authoritative than the medical treatises and the popular magical charms for removing the poison of the snake-bite from the human body etc.–charms that were viewed in ancient India as closely related to medical practice.

Gautama sometimes gives an impression was if he is blind follower of the Vedas. But whatever he does was to placate the Vedic orthodoxy of the age. For example Gautama talks of the Vedic injunction regarding पुत्रकामेष्टि (the Yajna which gives son to the performer) and his commentator explains–'If there is female disease or male sterility or perverse union, there is no son in spite of the performance of the prescribed ritual. The performance of the ritual results in obtaining the son only when the male and the female are physically fit for procreation and they unite in the right manner.' Can such-like arguments be taken as a serious consideration in defence of the actual efficacy of the ritual itself? This is the value of the Vedas in the eyes of Nyaya sutras.

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1. *प्रत्यक्षानुमानोपमानशब्दाः प्रमाणानि. (न्यायसूत्र 1-1-3)*

It means that Gautama and his commentator Vatsyayana knew that sons were born of the physically fit couples even without their performance of the prescribed ritual. Despite that if they take the name of the Vedas, it means they are under pressure and try simply to placate the dominant Vedic orthodoxy of the age to avoid their wrath.

Gautama said, 'Like the validity of the mantra and āyurveda, its (i.e. of the Veda) validity is proved because of the trustworthiness of the person uttering it.[1]

"The implications", says Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya, "of these were devastating not only for the real orthodox view of the Vedic validity but also for the theism of the later Nyaya-Vaisheshikas themselves, inasmuch as Gautama's statement amounted to the bringing down of the Vedic validity to a purely mundane–even banal–level.[2]

II

In the 528 Nyaya-Sutras, there is only one sutra wherein the word 'god' is used,[3] that too to say that there was no 'God', because an important consideration of the ancient Indian theists in favour of 'him' was untenable.

It must be noted here that the above-said Sutra No. 19 is, in fact, to introduce the opinion of others. That is why the Commentator prefaces the sutra as under : 'others (people) say.[4] After introducing the Sutra 19 which says that it is god who gives fruits of one's deeds, Gautama asserts—No, God cannot give fruits if there are no deeds of the people.[5] Then again Gautam says in the next sutra no. 21—In the absence of man's deeds, god cannot do anything.[6]

After the Sutra 21, the commentator ends this subsection with this remark : These three sutras (19, 20 & 21) refute the idea that god is the cause.[7]

This is the real Gautam.

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1. *मन्त्रायुर्वेदप्रामाण्यवच्च तत्प्रामाण्यमाप्तप्रामाण्यात्, न्यायसूत्र, 2-1-69*
2. *Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya, Indian Atheism, p. 281*
3. *ईश्वरः कारणं पुरुषकर्माफल्यदर्शनात्. (न्यायसूत्र, 4-1-19)*
4. *अथापर आहः (वात्स्यायनभाष्यम्)*
5. *न, पुरुषकर्माभावे फलानिष्पत्तेः (4-1-20)*
6. *तत्कारितत्वादहेतुः (4-1-21)*
7. *इति त्रिभिः सूत्रैरीश्वरमात्रकारणतानिराकरणप्रकरणम्. (वात्स्यायनभाष्यम्)*

But the Vaisheshika-sutra completely ignored the concept of god. There is not even a cursory mention of god in the entire work–not even for the sake of refutation.

Why is it so? Because the author does not believe in god. He was deeply influenced by the general outlook of the Mimamsakas. According to this outlook, the rejection of the idea of god was necessary in order to make room for its fundamental assumption that human action–particularly in the form of the Yajna–by itself or because of its own inherent efficacy ultimately produced the desired result.

The Nyaya-Vaisheshikas were Svabhava-vadis. They did not favour the nimitta karana (निमित्तकारण)–a conscious agent. Gautama, with the extremely limited knowledge of embryology available in his age, assigned that more factors than the mere atoms were involved in the process of foetal development. One of these factors, according to him, was Adrishta (अदृष्ट) or the 'unseen". This Adrishta was something inherently unconscious. The Nyaya-Vaisheshikas themselves also conceived it as a purely material force, source of the examples with which it was illustrated in the Vaisheshika-sutra (5-1-15 & 5-2-7) being the movement of the needle towards the magnet and the upward movement of the water in the plant-bodies. The mention by Gautama of such an essentially material force as a factor contributing to the total development is the clear acceptance of the doctrine of svabhava and the rejection of nimitta-karan or efficient cause of the world.

This doctrine of Svabhava-vada was the antithesis of theism. The Lokayata and the Samkhyas followed it. Here in the case of Nyaya-Vaisheshikas, the atomists followed it. As Svabhava-vada is a materialist doctrine, it is crystal clear that Nyaya-Vaisheshikas were materialists so far as their original works–the Sutra granthas–are concerned.

Atheism of Sankhya and Yoga

Sankhya philosophy is very old. Shvetashvatara Upanishad (V.2) refers to Kapila who is the founder of this philosophy. The upanishad belongs to the 6th century B.C. The Buddha also contacted some scholars of this philosophy when he was searching for knowledge.

Apart from Kapila, the names of a number of ancient Sankhya teachers have come down to us, but these are nothing more than bare names. We come across references to some ancient Samkhya treatises, but actual treatises are lost. Today we have two treatises. Of these, the older is called the Samkhya-karika written by a certain Ishvarakrishana and usually placed in the 2nd century A.D. The other work is called the Sankhy-sutra of the 14th century A.D.

Nothing is said about god in the Samkhya-karika, but Samkhya-sutra openly declares : ईश्वरासिद्धेः (1/92) i.e. there is no god as god cannot be proved.

The Samkhya atheism directly follows from the view that primeval matter, moved by the laws of motion in it (स्वभाव), adequately accounted for the origin and development of the world. Hence it was redundant to admit the existence of god. This redundance was only a corollary of the self-sufficiency of the principle of Prakriti to account for the origin of the world, and the self-sufficiency of the principle of Prakriti followed from the implicit acceptance of the doctrine of Svabhava. Grass and water, taken by the cow, naturally got themselves transformed into milk that nourished the calf. So was the process of the transformation of primeval matter into the world; or we may say, the evolution of the world from primeval matter. There was no question of any supernatural principle guiding either of the processes and no question of assuming god as the efficient cause (निमित्तकारण) of the world.

Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya says, "such a way of outgrowing the need of the admission of any supernatural principle must have been the mark of an extremely bold intellectual adventure."

To this the author of Samkhy-sutra replies that in that case, your so-called god is reduced to the status of the mere mundane ruler of an ordinary king : लौकिकेश्वरवदितरथा (5/4)

If the theist agrees to admit this,then his god becomes only a nominal one : पारिभाषिको वा. (5/5)

If you say that god acts like a governor, then your god is bound to deprive of his eternal freedom, because governing is done under the compulsion of attachment. The theist has to admit either that god does not govern at all or that he is not eternally free. In both alternatives, god no longer remains god :

– न रागादृते तत्सिद्धिः प्रतिनियतकारणत्वात् (5/6)

– तद्योगेऽपि न नित्यमुक्तः (5/7)

The theist says that the divine qualities do not constitute limitations of god, because these qualities, as subsisting in eternal god, are themselves eternal. His desire, intelligence, etc. as subsisting in god, are eternal, because god himself is eternal.

The author of Samkhya-sutra replying to this argument says that this claim is absurd; because the nature of a quality, does not change with the change of its substratum, just as fire remains fire even if it burns ordinary wood or Sandal wood or a dead body. Similar are the cases of intelligence, etc. These cannot be eternal, even though these were admitted to subsist in an eternal substratum. Moreover, the question of such a substratum does not arise, because it is unproved :

– न बुद्ध्यादिनित्यत्वमाश्रयविशेषेऽपि वह्निवत्. (5/127)

– आश्रयासिद्धेश्च. (5/128)

Convinced on thoroughly rational grounds that primeval matter by itself was the first cause of the world, the Samkhya philosophers found it redundant to admit the existence of god. Consistently with this rational approach, they wanted also to prove this redundance. That they did in two ways : First, by showing that the concept of god was infested with unresolved contradictions. Secondly, by showing that no recognised instrument of valid knowledge proved the existence of god : प्रमाणाभावान्न तत्सिद्धिः (5/10).

भाष्यम्: तत्सिद्धिर्नित्येश्वरे तावत् प्रत्यक्षं नास्ति. (5/10, विज्ञानभिक्षुभाष्यम्) i.e. There is no question of god being proved by direct sense-perecption.

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Equally, there is no inferential proof of god, because of the want of universal relation–सम्बन्धाभावान्नानुमानम्. (5/11)

In fine, though to admit the Vedas as one of instruments of knowledge is under pressure of orthodoxy (1/87 ff), it is heartening to note that even in a treatise as late as the Samkhya-sutra (14th century A.D.), into which entered all sorts of ideas alien to the spirit of the original Samkhya, the atheistic emphasis of the philosophy definitely survived, as also did the tendency to establish this atheism on thoroughly rational grounds.

The Yoga-darshana or Yoga-sutra of Patanjali has the same philosophy which Samkhya has. That is why they are considered as a couple Samkhya-Yoga, as is the case of Nyaya-Vaisheshika. Samkhya does not believe in god, whereas Yoga does. So the Yoga is called 'Samkhya with god' (सेश्वरसांख्य). But it must be noted that the god (ईश्वर) of Yoga is not the creator of the world. He is simply a particular man (पुरुष विशेष). The Yoga-sutra says : क्लेशकर्मविपाकाशयैरपरामृष्टः पुरुषविशेष ईश्वरः (Yogasutra, 1/24) i.e. Ishwara is a special man, who is untouched by ignorance and the products of ignorance; not subject to karmas or samskaras or the results of actions.

When one attains Liberation (कैवल्य the stage of absolute loniness), he reaches this afore-said stage. It means a liberated man is Ishwara according to Patanjali. There is no supernaturalism in it. Any person can become Ishwara, if he works hard. The Ishwara of Yoga is simply a special or liberated man. He is neither the creator of the world nor its governor. It is simply the hight stage of man, according to Yoga-sutra. It is sheer atheism, as it does not believe in god–the creator &/or the governor of the world.

Atheism of Mimansa-Darshan

Mimansa is one of the Six Hindu or astika darshanas. The Mimansa-sutra is a compilation of 2500 sutra (aphorisms) attributed to a certain Jaimini. Scholars place this work between 200 BC and A.D. 200, because the exact date cannot be ascertained.

The earliest extant commentary on the Mimansa-sutra is the Shabara-Bhashya, the name of the Commentator being Shabar. Shabara could not, according to Ganganath Jha,[1] be later the A.D. 400.

The greatest Mimansakas after Shabara were Prabhakara and Kumarila. Both commented on the Shabara bhashya. Apart from his major work called Brihati, Prabhakara wrote a smaller work called Laghvi. Kumarila's work consisted of three parts, called the Shloka-vartika, Tantra-vartika and the Tup-tika.

According to Ganganath Jha[2] Prabhakara was a senior contemporary of Kumarila and Kumarila may have lived in A.D. 700.

Though the main theme of Mimansa is theoretical discussions of the Vedic rituals, Jaimini showed not even a cursory interest in the conception of god. Shabara also rejected it and says that there is no proof of his existence.[3] The Mimansa thesis that Vedic deities were nothing more than the words used in the Vedas was elaborately worked out by Shabara himself. The later Mimansakas fully accepted his thesis regarding the Vedic deities.

Both Prabhakara and Kumarila, with all their mutual differences, elaborately argued why the assumption of god was completely illogical.

Prabhakara's views

Prabhakara argued that the idea of creation was a myth. Explaining his position, A.B. Keith says, Experience, Prabhakara urges, shows us the bodies of all animals being produced by purely natural means; we

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1. *Ganganath Jha, Purva Mimansa in its Sources, 14*
2. *Ibid., 14*
3. *Shàbara-Bhashya, Mimansa-sutra, 1-1-5*

can argue hence to the facts of the past and the future, and need invoke no extraneous aid.[1]

Ganganath Jha says, 'The Prabhakara denies a creator of the universe; even though he admits that the universe is made of component parts, and as such it must have a beginning and an end in time,–yet he finds no reason for believing that the Universe, as a whole, has had a beginning at any one particular point of time, or that it would come to an end at any one particular point of time; hence, if the consituent factors of the universe have a beginning, they much each individually have their beginnings, one after the other; in fact that is what is actually found to be the case in everyday experience.'[2]

The Nyaya-Vaisheshikas claimed that the merit (dharma) and demerit (Adharma) of the individual souls resulting from their past actions were in need of being guided by god (a superhuman agent), because dharma and adharma were themselves unconscious. Refuting this, the Prabhakaras said that the very idea of god supervising the dharma and adharma of the individuals was an absurdity, because they (dharma and adharma) "must always belong to the same intelligent being to whom the body itself belongs; any other being, howsoever intelligent, can never have any knowledge of this dharma and adharma of another being; hence the ultra-mundane god could have no knowledge of the dharma and adharma of the being that is born as man or animal etc.; and without such knowledge, he could not exercise any effective control over it."[3]

In order to supervise, one must possess the necessary knowledge of that dharma and adharma, which is impossible for god to possess. "God cannot perceive merit or demerit by perception, since they are not pesceptible, nor by mind, which is confined to the body which it occupies."[4]

The Nyaya-Vaisheshikas try to prove god with the instance of the ordinary agents like the potter, carpenter, etc. But the charateristic pecularities of such an instance of an agent cannot be applied to the case of creator. "In the case of the ordinary agents e.g. the carpenter, the supervision exercised consists in their contact with the wood-pieces upon which the man works. This is not possible in the case of god. Nor

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1. *A.B. Keith, Karma-Mimansa, p. 61*
2. *G. Jha, op.cit., p. 45*
3. *Ibid, p. 45*
4. *A.B. Keith, Op.Cit., p. 61*

it is possible for the operations of god to have any effect on the dharma-adharma of beings; because dharma-adharma of being are qualities, and hence they could not come into contact with any operation of things."[1]

(It be noted here that according to Nyaya-Vaisheshika, only two forms or relation are recognised : one is called Sanyoga (conjunction, contact) and the other is Samavaya (inherence). Contact is possible only between the substances while the individual destiny is considered a quality. Hence contact is impossible between god and the individual distiny. Here Samavaya relation cannot exist because individual destiny inheres in the individual and not in god. God cannot supervise the dharma and adharma of individual souls, as claimed.)

An ordinary carpenter can produce something because he has a body, has the will to produce and because he puts forth the specific effort required for the production. But none of these is possible in the case of god, because he has no body, he is simply a disembodied spirit. Without body will and efforts are impossible. If the god-vadi says that he (god) has a body, then questions of other type arise : How his body comes into being? How to account for the will and efforts of god necessary for production? If he says, all that is eternal, he will have to commit himself to the absurdity of admitting that the process of the creation of the world is also eternal.

Secondly, the theist cannot point to anything that motivates god to create the world or to supervise the process of creation. "God cannot be such a supervisor", says G. Jha, "because he cannot have any motive in exercising this supervision. We cannot deny the truth of the proposition that there is intelligent supervision only in cases where some purpose of the supervisor is served by the supervision. Then, again, the same argument that would prove the existence of the intelligent supervisor would also prove that supervisor to be an embodied or corporeal being; as the Nyayayika bases his argument upon the analogy of the carpenter supervising and guiding the making of wooden articles, and as this carpenter is also a corporeal being, the analogy extended further would prove the supervising god also to be a corporeal being. But, at the same time, we know that no corporeal being can exercise any effective and intelligent control over such subtle things as atoms, dharma and adharma. Even if he did exercise such control, he himself, as a corporeal

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1. *G. Jha, op.cit., p. 46*

being, would have to be the creation of another supervisor or creator, ad so on *ad infinitum*. Thus, then, the supervisor of the work of creation being impossible, it has to be regarded as a never-ending process of things coming into exisence and passing out of it."[1]

Refuting the assertion of the theists that the bodies of men and animals come into being under the supervision of god, Prabhakaras said, "There are some things–for example the bodies of men and animals–which are actually brought into existence by the operation of their parents, and not by any external supervising agency."[2]

These are some of the ways in which the Prabhakaras refuted the idea of god.

Kumarila Bhatta's views

Unlike Śāntarakṣita and Guṇaratna, whose refutation of theism was almost exclusively confined to the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika inference of God, Kumārila's anti-theistic polemic covered a much broader front. He wanted to refute theism in practically all the important forms in which it was known to him. It may be divided broadly into three parts. First, the refutation of the doctrine of God which was perhaps originally expounded by Bādarāyaṇa in the *Brahmasūtra* (verses 43 to 66). Secondly, the refutation of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika view of God (verses 67 to 82). Thirdly, the refutation of the Advaita Vedāntic conception of creation (verses 83 to 86). (Vide shlokavarttika)

Mimansa-darshana is a great supporter of the Vedic Yajna-vada; so one may, perhaps, think that we have exaggerated the influence of Charvaka on it. But in fact the Charvakian influence on it is so deep that Kumarila, a towering philosopher of this school of thought himself admits this influence, though grudgingly when he writes in the beginning of his *magnum opus*, namely *Mimansa Shloka Varttika* as under :

प्रायेणैव हि मीमांसा लोके लोकायतीकृता (MSV 1, 1, 1 Ka 10)

Generally the Mimansa has been Lokayatized i.e. Charvakiazed, atheistized.

When the Mimansa philosophers themselves admit that this has been turned into an atheistic, into Lokayata school of thought, there is no scope for us to exaggerate the influence of the latter on the former.

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1. *Ibid*
2. *Ibid, p. 45*

Shanti-Deva & Atheism

Shanti Deva (685-736 AD), an 8th century Buddhist philosopher and author of Bodhicharyavatara, has refuted the concept of god as under :-

ईश्वरो जगतो हेतुः, वद कस्तावदीश्वरः,
भूतानि चेद् भवत्वेवं नाममात्रेऽपि किं श्रमः.

[Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika] God is the cause of the world. [Mādhyamika] Then explain what God is. If he is 'the elements', so be it, but then why the fuss over a mere name?

अपि त्वनेकेऽनित्याश्च निश्चेष्टाः, न च देवताः,
लंघ्याश्चाशुचयश्चैव क्षमादयो न स ईश्वरः.

Moreover, the earth and other elements are not one, nor permanent. They are inert and not divine. One can walk on them. They are impure. That is not God.

नाकाशमीशोऽचेष्टत्वात्, नात्मा पूर्वनिषेधतः,
अचिन्त्यस्य च कर्तृत्वमप्यचिन्त्यं किमुच्यते.

Space cannot be God, because it is inert. Nor is the Self because its existence was disproved above. If creativity belongs to what is beyond conception, what can be said of the inconceivable?

तेन किं स्रष्टुमिष्टं च, आत्मा चेत्, नन्वसौ ध्रुवः,
क्षमादिस्वभाव ईशश्च ज्ञानं ज्ञेयादनादि च.

What does he want to create? If a Self, surely that is something eternal? God, consciousness resulting from a cognizable object, and the nature of earth and other elements, are without beginning.

कर्मणः सुखदुःखे च, वद किं तेन निर्मितम्,
हेतोरादिर्न चेदस्ति फलस्यादिः कुतो भवेत्.

Suffering and happiness are the result of action. So say what he created? If you argue that the cause has no beginning, how could there be a beginning to its effect?

कस्मात् सदा न कुरुते? न हि सोऽन्यमपेक्षते,
तेनाकृतोऽन्यो नास्त्येव तेनासौ किमपेक्षताम्.

How come he does not create continuously, if he is not dependent on anything else? There is nothing else whatsoever which was not made by him, so on what might he depend?

अपेक्षते चेत् सामग्रीं हेतुर्न पुनरीश्वरः,
नाकर्तुमीशः सामग्र्यां, न कर्तुं तदभावतः.

If you argue that God is dependent on a combination of conditions, then again he is not the cause. He would have the power neither to refrain from creating if the combination of conditions were present, nor to create if they were absent.

करोत्यनिच्छन्नीशश्चेत् परायत्तः प्रसज्यते,
इच्छन्नपीइच्छायत्तः स्यात्, कुर्वतः कुत ईशता.

If you argue that God creates without desiring to create, it follows that he is subject to something other than himself. Even if he creates out of the desire to create, he is subject to desire. In what way does this creator have omnipotence?[1]

1. *Shanti Deva, Bodhicharyavatara, 9/119-126*

Counterfeit Theism

Certain casteists and religionists including those who are opposed to the present ruling out fit, attack, ridicule only Hindu gods, scriptures and practices on Facebook in the name of Atheism/Rationalism/ Humanism, etc. They do not touch the Deras and Sants of their own castes; Christianity and Jesus; Mohammad and Quran; and superstitions and social evils of all these castes and religions, which constitute a big chunk of the India population. I think, I stand to be corrected, they are snollygosters, they pretend to be atheists/Rationalists simply to criticize only a particular religion for extraneous reasons. This exercise is not motivated by any philosophical consideration or search for truth. They do so to settle their scores with the ruling out fit and the religion followed by it. They have no philosophy, logic and scientific attitude. They have hatred, so they only hurt. They are more dangerous than what they pretend to annihilate, because their aim is to give vent to their hatred against other castes and religions. That is why they are not consistent, not serious and have no atheistic/rationalistic epistmology, cosmology and ethics. They are simply frivolous.

I have seen a book by a Christian–Why I am not a Hindu. When you are a Christian, you are not a Hindu. Then nothing is extra required. A person who in his boyhood is converted to Christianity, he later simply invents arguments to justify his conversion and to overcome his sense of defeat, if not sense of guilt. If one has all the arguments before getting lured into conversion, we have no objection in that case. But what generally we see is the opposite of it–carriage is put before the horse. Conversion takes place first, arguments to justify that are invented later but shown opperational retroactively. If one criticizes Hinduism objectively without malice that is a treat for us; but that should not have an ulterior motive. If you disrespect Hindu gods, but praise your tribal gods–the gods you used to worship before getting converted & still worship them as a habit–then you are not a rationalist and your criticism of the Hinduism is motivated by the religious hatred, however subtle that may be; because a rationalist bids farewell to all gods–not only of 'this' religion or of 'that'. If you still believe in gods, no matter if

they are of your tribal heritage, you are miles away from Rationalism. Your god is bad, my god is good; my religious saint is good, your bad–that is irrationalism and theism. This lack of objectivity and deluge of subjectivety only expose the skulduggery on the part of the person concerned. Therefore the book in question is a 'hate speech' against other religions and people, as the author is mum about the superstitions of his adopted creed. So that book cannot be placed in the category in which we place Bertrand Russell's *Why I am not a Christian*, and Ibn Warraq's *Why I am not a Muslim*; for Rationalism and Atheism, a superstition is a superstition; a sacerdotalism is a sacerdotalism, irrespective of the identity of religion. They (Rationalism & Atheism) neither prefer political correctness nor do they become selectively operational. They operate like the proverbial juggernaut that crushes whatever irrational, illogical and unscientific comes in its path.

x x x

All the so-called theists are practically staunch atheists. Their theism seems to be, at best, only of paying lip service to it.

Atheists do not believe in an omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient entity (Omni3), so they lock their houses for the security of their belongings; they go to a man specialist in medicine when they fall ill and report to authorities when some untoward incident takes place. But theists have a security officer who is said to be omnipresent. But they all, invariably, lock their houses; not only that, they lock those buildings also where their god resides, where they vow to him, where they pray, etc. If the building contains valuable articles, as is the case with certain temples and other places of worship, armed security men are employed to protect the building and idols of the omnipresent and omnipotent round the clock.

Cannot that Omnipresent take care of himself and the building or the book attributed to him placed in the building? Why is a man with limited presence and potency supposed to be more competent than the Omnipresent & Omnipotent? Is the said Omnipresent etc. entity nonentity? You pray to that Entity for protection from your foes, but to protect him you use paid employees! What a farce!

The drama goes on. You declare : without his concurrence not even a leaf can move. But when you fall seriously ill or get badly hit in an accident, you do not go to your place of worship and the object

of your worship. Instead, you run to a man who has limited capacities and does not claim omnipresence & omnipotence. Why is it so? When even a leaf cannot move without his consent, then, it is clear that your falling ill or your getting hit in an accident, has his approval. That being so, a man with limited capacities cannot undo what has been done by the Omnipresent. Your going to him in the first place is an act of your practical atheism. You know in your heart of hearts that only doctor can save, not the nonentity invoked daily. That becomes true when you get well owing to the medicine administered by the doctor. You pray to the nonentity but use the medicine given by a limited man. You can become free from ailment or pain without prayer, but not without medicine. This much you know in your heart of hearts. That is why you act against your own profession.

If there is really an omni-3 entity; if that entity really controls, even the movement of a leaf, then your falling ill and getting hit in an accident is also permitted by him. In that case, no doctor can heal you. What has been done by the Omnipresent & Omnipotent cannot be undone by a limited man with limited capacities. But in day-to-day life we see that people who fall ill, get well when they are treated by a man called doctor. What does that mean? It means, the assertion parroted by you is false : the movement of the leaf is not controlled by any imaginary entity which is in fact nonentity. Otherwise a sickman–victim of omni-3–cannot become healthy at the hands of a man with limited capacities. The fact that a sickman becomes healthy after using the medicine given by the doctor who is not omnipresent and omnipotent, falsifies the assertion that there is an entity which is omnipresent, omnipotent, etc. and that entity controls even the movements of a leaf of the tree. The presence of armed guards at religious places, the so-called abodes of that entity, to protect the abodes and the idols or books, mocks at the omnipresence of that entity and the gullibility of the believer.

Why does man do such ridiculous things? Out of habit. In childhood parents and priests constantly din into the ears of the child such mumbo-jumbo and abracadabra. When the child becomes an adult, he faces two worlds; one that was dinned into his head but which is nowhere; second the world which is real and in which he lives. The first world, the world of his childhood, does not leave him alone. That constantly plagues him. So he pays lip service to it and becomes busy with the world around

him. In the place of worship he utters such words mechanically as are supposed to be uttered there, but no meanings thereof are meant. There one would say : Even a leaf of a tree cannot move without the permission of the omnipresent and omnipotent; but when in the real world he falls ill or gets hit in an accident, he does not remember what he repeats in the place of worship which was dinned into his ears by the parents and the priest; but he acts as an adult human being who knows that ailment can be cured by a doctor, not by that entity or its agents. He does not complaint against that omnipresent and omnipotent forsooth without whose permission not even a leaf can move, when he is hit by the public transport bus. On the contrary he complaints against the driver and the public transport dept. Why? When without that character's permission a leaf cannot move, then how can a bus move? That being so, why should not that real culprit, that remote controller, he sued for the damages? When man cannot do anything independently and every event, from small to smallest, takes place with his permission, then how are the bus driver and the dept of Public Transport, responsible for the mishap and liable to pay damages?

People go on a pilgrimage to Kedar Nath/Mecca/Varanasi/ Ajmer and meet an accident–boat carrying them gets capasized; their vehicle gets struck against a stone or tree, or stones fall on them as a result of landslide. In such cases, they demand damages from the government of the people; not from the celestial govt. by the Omnipresent and Omnipotent. Why? They were going to or coming from the abode of that omnipresent; due to omnipresence, he knew all that. Even then if an accident is there, only he should be sued and damages should be demended from him. Why the government of the people, who have limited capacities, be held responsible for it? Why should it give damages? Were you going on government duty that the government should pay damages? When you were paying a visit to your Omnipresent–God; Allah, Eshvar–sue him. You were his guest, he is omnipresent i.e. he knew accident was going to be, he is omnipotent, i.e. he had the power to avoid the accident. If he does not do what he is expected to do, only he should be sued. But no theist does so. Why they do not do so?

The agents of the Onmi-3 or the inventors of the Omni-3, are good trappers. They tell their victim, you could be saved by the Omni-3, but

as there were your bad deeds of previous birth or as there was mentioned otherwise in your Kismat, so you could not be saved.

If there are bad deeds of previous birth or unfavourable entry in the Kismat (Fate), then does all types of 'omnis' get blunted? If omnis are thus blunted then what is the use of repeating, his name, of praying, of vowing and doing all sorts of religious acrobatics? If previous deeds and predetermined fate determine all the events of life, then what is the use of all religious acts, rituals and the rest? Are not then they useless?

Who writes kismat? On what basis the writer does so? If it is based on the previous karmas, then why do you mention it a separate thing from the Karama? If it is written without any basis, then is it a whimsical thing?

If it is based on karmas, then they are important and the Omni-3 is a superfluous thing. If it is a whimsical thing that matters, even then the Omni-3 is redundant, because the Omni-3 cannot overrule what is mentioned there. In the both ways, he is helpless. What help can a helpless entity do for you?

The trappers say that if you pray, vow, worship the Omni-3, that will help you in future. This is sheer nonsense. When our prayers, worship, etc. at present are ineffective, then how can all that be effective in the distant future? What is the proof of that effectiveness in the distant future, when failure at present is obvious? Karmas of one life are carried over to the next birth, the trappers say. But what is the proof? There is no proof that man takes rebirth. Majority of religions and people, does not believe in it. Science does not endorse next birth. Only the Hindus and some religions based on Hindu culture, talk of the rebirth. It is a religious belief, not an objective reality.

Deeds are good or bad, it is a human affair. Human societies at different places and in different periods had different yardsticks for good or bad. Even today, certain societies consider beef eating very bad while others rejoice eating beef. Some others abhor pig, while others relish its meat. It is bad in some societies to marry one's own sister, whereas in ancient Egypt pharaohs (kings) used to marry their sisters for purity of blood. These are some of the examples which underline the fact that the definitions of good and bad widely differed in different societies in different periods. There is nothing good or bad in the eyes of Nature. These concepts are man-made and not universal or/and natural. That

being so, no abstract natural power, for example, gravitational force, can and does decide what is good or what is bad. Only a Hindu god can prepare a list of good and bad deeds as per their perception. Likewise, a Muslim god would draw a list according to their perception. All that is subjective and religious, not objective and natural. That being so, there cannot be natural fate, destiny, kismat etc. on the basis of good or bad deeds or whims. For Nature, matter only undergoes change, nothing more, nothing less. Fate, etc. are man-made subjective concepts. So when a pilgrim is dented on his way to or on his return journey from his god, there is no karma or fate. Imaginary things cannot cause accidents. If karma is imagined by a Hindu; kismet is imagined by a Muslim and fate is imagined by a western. These are ploys in fact to fill the gaps in their religious theories so that a victim once trapped does not escape. Whenever their religious assertion seems to be punctured, they use the above ploy as a stopgap.

Even if these are ploys, these are produced by the priests only to counterbalance their variety of god. Some have created Satan and others Evil. All these are counter-gods. When a theist says that there is only god, nothing else; then how can Kismet, Fate, Satan, Evil, Karma, etc. operate and annul the omnipresence and omnipotence of god? Those who have created above-said ploys or others of this type, are those who in fact feel that god alone is insufficient–whatever is said to justify his existence, his leela, seems not enough at times. So they try to provide him supplementary diet. It is clear that they feel god is insufficient alone. This insufficiency of god is a fact that every theist feels. That is why he catches at a straw like the proverbial drowning man. That is sheer atheism. A theist remains a theist so long as he does not get rid of the habit inculcated in him by the parents or/and the priest. But when he comes out of the cocoon, he sees there is no god, no other ploys.

Why do the people not came out of the cocoon? Because they feel safe there in it. When there is a dent in the cocoon, they pretend that it is our illusion, the cocoon is safe. In this way man lives by self-deception : if god has not blessed him, there might he his own fault. He might have done bad deeds in some previous birth or his kismet is bad or fate has ordained against him. Why these excuses? Because man does not want to leave the blanket that has become wet and heavy simply because of his habit. But these excuses are the proof of the insufficiency of the

concept of god. That insufficiency causes man to make excuses and he starts living a life of self-deception. If we go deep, we would find that the moment one starts making such-like excuses, he becomes an atheist to that extent because he feels the insufficiency of the concept of god. A theist sails in a ship being filled with water, though he might be blissfully unaware of that! He who becomes aware of that becomes Atheists and uses life-boats. This is the only difference between a theist and an atheist.

tailpiece : Almost all theists believe in their own version of heaven. If in the Hindu heaven there are apsras (celestial prostitutes/nymphs), there are 72 houris (nymphs of Paradise) in the Muslim Jannat. There are many persons who do not get married owing to this or that reason, but are eager to have a wife. They can easily find 72 houris or unspecified number of apsras in their respective heavens, if only they commit suicide. But no one does so. They need joy here on the earth, because they are not sure of the heaven and the nymphs. Practically, they are atheists. They do not seem to believe in the words of god who is supposed to have said about that place & the nymphs thereof, in the books atributed to him. The theists do not walk the talk; so they lose credibility and trust.

Charvaka's Description

In the fragmentary literature of the Charvakas found in various books of the Hindus, Buddhists and Jains, we do not find any description of the Charvakas. It is only in the commentary of Gunaratna (1343-1418 A.D.) on the Shad-darshana of Haribhadra (C. 750 A.D.) that we find the description of them.

He writes : The Charvaka ascetics hold a vowl in their hand like the Kapalic ascetics and smear ashes on the body. In them are found Brahmans as well as the untouchables (Antyajas) ...They drink liquor and eat meat. They are promiscuous–they copulate even with their mothers. Every year on a particular day they get together and draw lottery. In this process the names of which women come with those men, they enjoy with them i.e. all men enjoy with all women on the basis of lottery.

This seems a caricature of the Charvakas. Gunaratna was a digamber (naked) jain ascetic. He seems to be misinformed. That they held a vowl and smeared ashes on body, may be right with regard to a section of the Charvakas; but the charge of promiscuity may be due to ideological hatred. When we hate, we imagine all sorts of evils in our target of hatred. The pious people also imagine all others as the wretched of the earth. Gunaratna might have imagined so in the overflowing piety!

Jain scholar Pt. Sukhlal and Prof. Rasik Lal Pareekh say : We do not find any Sutra or sentence in the name of Brihaspati that may throw light on the conduct of the Charvakas. In such a situation we cannot accept as true what others have said regarding their conduct. We know from many Tantrik books about the conduct of Vamamargis, Tantriks and Kapaliks. They were free from all rules or restrictions–no holds were barred. But that conduct with no holds barred, was acceptable to the Charvakas, cannot be asserted because there is no evidence to that effect.[1]

In ancient India, particularly in the times of Kularnava Tantra, there were people whose conduct was like this. Maha Mahopadhyaya Dr. P.V. Kane describes in his 'Dharma Shastra Ka Itihas' the Chakrapuja.

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1. *See Introduction in Hindi to Tattvopaplava Singh, p. 6*

He writes that an equal number of men and women assemble secretly in the night, without any consideration of caste or relationship, and sit around a paper on which 'chakra' is drawn as a symbol of goddess. All the women remove their cholis and put those in a pot. Every man picks up a choli at random and makes the woman whose choli he has picked up, his partner for the night. A Hindu Tantrika book, "Kularnava Tantra", Dr. Kane says, mentions the god has ordered that whatever good or bad transpires that night must never be disclosed.

Dr. Kane had heard in his childhood that this puja was practiced in some cities in Maharashtra (Marathi Translation by Y.B. Bhat, p. 430, second edition, 1980, Maharashtra Rajya Sahitya Sanskruti Mandal, Mantralaya, Mumbai)

There was also a game Ghat-kanchuki (Choli in the pot) game that was played in some parts of India. But the question is : What has it all to do with the conduct of the Charvakas?

It seems, Gunaratna either imagined this conduct with regard the Charvakas or he was misinformed by someone. He might have seen some people–a group of ascetics living such a life and he took them for the Charvakas.

Whatever may be the reason, Gunaratna's description is baseless, fabricated and smacks of hatred for those having different views than those held by him. If really they were such people, almost all the opponents would have exposed their wretchedness without mincing their words. But no one has ever described them so, though almost every Vedic, Buddhist and Jain philosopher has used severest words against them and has criticised their views without any sympathy.

As the Charvakas were aware of the opposition being faced by them at every step, they could not afford to be complacent in their conduct. They were, I think, disciplined people who were always on their guard with regard to their conduct.

No sexual relations are ideal and eternal. If others have different type of relations, heavens are not going to fall. In the Vedic period, there was Niyoga. Under this practice, others than the husbands used to impregnate the wives of others.

There are Vedic statements which may seem to be shocking as we are accustomed to a different set of sexual rules–

(1) पिता दुहितुर्गर्भमाधात् (अथर्ववेद 9-10-12)
(Father impregnated the daughter)

(2) प्रजापतिर्वा इदमासीत्तस्य वाग् द्वितीयासीत्ताम्मिथुनं समभवत्सा गर्भमादधत्त. (ताण्ड्य ब्राह्मण, 20-14-2)
(Prajapati was alone, second was saraswati (vak). Both of them met and she became pregnant.)

(3) मातुर्दिधिषुमब्रवं स्वसुर्जारः शृणोतु नः,
भ्रातेन्द्रस्य सखा मम. (ऋग्वेद 6-55-5)
(I say to the up-pati of mother, the lover of sister should hear us who is the brother of Indra.)

(4) स्वकीयां च सुतां ब्रह्मा, विष्णुदेवः स्वमातरम्,[1]
भगिनीं भगवाञ्छम्भुर्गृहीत्वा श्रेष्ठतामगात्. (भविष्यपुराण, प्रतिसर्ग, खण्ड 4, अ. 18)
(Brahma became great after getting his daughter, Vishnu after getting his mother and Shambhu after getting his sister).

(5) मातृयोनिं परित्यज्य विहरेत् सर्वयोनिषु. (सत्यार्थप्रकाश, एकादश समुल्लास)
(One should use all vaginas except that of the mother.)

(6) न कांचेन परिहरेत्तद्व्रतम्. (छान्दोग्य उप. 2-13-2)
(He should not spare no woman, that becomes his vow)

What Indra did with Ahalya, wife of Gotama is very well known to the readers of the Ramayana of Valmiki. In ancient Egypt pharaohs (kings) used to marry their sisters to maintain purity of blood. Even in the 21st century people in certain clubs swap their wives irrespective of religion.

That being the ground reality, heavens are not going to fall even if the Charvakas were doing that what Gunaratna has alleged.

As Gunaratna has identified the Charvakas with the Kapalikas, so D.R. Shastri has identified them with the Sahajias.[2] The description of the Sahajias given by Mr. Shastri is as repelling as that of Gunaratna's of the Kapalikas. Both of them have fallen easy prey to the popular prejudice. If Gunratna was against the Charvakas, Mr. Shastri was a sympathizer of that philosophy; even then he could not arise above the level of the former. In his heart of hearts, the Shastri is against the Charvakas, it seems.

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1. *All these references have been taken from* **पुराणदिग्दर्शन**, *by Pt. Madhavacharya Shastri of (Sanatan Dharma) where meanings are given in Hindi.*
2. *D.R. Shastri, A Short History of Indian Materialism, Sensationalism and Hedonism, see conclusion.*

Tattvopaplavasingh

Jayarashi has written Tattvopaplavasingha, which is preached by certain people as a complete book of Charvaka philosophy, though the author himself does not declare it so. He only says that 'the dialectical alternatives of Jayarashi which are proficient in repudiating heretics and are nourished by the ocean of knowledge.'

In the whole book, he does not refer to any principle of Charvaka. Actually, the book is against all the principles–'Lion in the form of upsetting of principles' (तत्त्वोपप्लवसिंह). Therefore in the very outset he busted the citadel of Charvaka when he says :

'अथातस्तत्त्वं व्याख्यास्यामः'। 'पृथिव्यापस्तेजोवायुरिति तत्त्वानि तत्समुदाये शरीरेन्द्रियविषयसंज्ञा', इत्यादि? न, अन्यार्थत्वात्. (...) पृथिव्यादीनि तत्त्वानि लोके प्रसिद्धानि, तान्यपि विचार्यमाणानि न व्यवतिष्ठन्ते, किं पुनरन्यानि?

'Now, therefore, we shall expand the ultimate principle..'

'The principles are earth, water, fire, air; the name body, sense organ or body is given to their conglomeration' and so forth. (Rejoinder)–No, this has another purpose. The principles earth, etc. are well known in the world (i.e. are popularly accepted); even they do not stand (i.e. they fail to be established) when scrutinised, then what to say of others'?

When you have rejected the matter, there remains nothing Charvakian in the book.

The author is a vainglorious guy who patting his own back says–'I have seen those principles which even the guru of gods could not observe' :

ये याता नहि गोचरं सुरगुरोः बुद्धेर्विकल्पा; प्राप्यन्ते ननु तेऽपि यत्र.

By the way, what are those? In the whole book if one finds anything, he finds empty verbiage. Brihaspati saw four elements, but Jayarashi failed even to see them–instead of seeing extra, he failed to see even the same. That is why those who clamour from their housetops that this book of Jayarashi is a complete book on the philosophy of Charvaka are unable to state even one principle of the Charvaka philosophy from the book.

What does Jayarashi Bhatta do?

He collected from different philosophical schools the arguments that were used by them against each other. For example he collected from Sankhya, Vedanta, Vedic karmakanda (Poorva Mimansa) and the Buddhists all those arguments that they were using against Nyaya. With that stick he beat that school.

Then he collected from the Nyaya school those arguments that it used against Sankhya, Vedanta, Poorva Mimansa and the Buddhists, and he used that stick against these schools.

That was intellectual prostitution, because what one refutes the opposite of that becomes one's view at that time. If you refute the existence of god, then 'there is no god' automatically becomes your view. But Jayarashi shamelessly rejects that view when he refutes an other philosophy. He uses such arguments of different schools as are based on different postulates. This is disingenuity.

No doubt, genuine doubt or sincere scepticism helps increase knowledge, but persons like Jayarashi are bound to enter a cul-de-sac. Like a railway engine running in a circle, they travel from no where and reach nowhere. After all the intellectual acrobatics and somersaults, there was no increase in the knowledge pool.

Truth is the first casualty at the hands of such persons, whereas Charvakas were seekers after truth. Such-like intellectual somersaults are available of others as well. Shriharsha, a Vedantist, have also done so. Those who insist on the basis of his acrobatics that Jayarashi was a representative of the Charvaka school, must admit that Shriharsha was a Charvaka, because he has performed similar futile intellectual excercise.

Old Testament of Eastern Atheism

The Charvakas were the forerunners of scientific research, says Rhys Davids.[1] As their literature is in the form of fragments and they never were static, we will have to be cautious in the assessment of that literature. What was said in the very beginning by them got developed in later centuries. Therefore one must not go parroting what they said in the initial stages at the cost of ignoring their more developed attitude and understanding. Idealists do so knowingly to malign them. Such persons cannot be true truthseekers.

Today we use Charvaka as a general name under which we can collect many tendencies and systems because in the absence of literture that name represents the other pole which is opposite to the idealistic pole. All the Nastika, materialist, Lokayata, Atheist, Barhaspatya, Savbhava-vadin, Bhutavadin, etc. are included in the Charvakas. They have become synonymous. In the past what was the situation cannot be stated in an authorized manner–were they different systems or were they subsystems of a one main system or were they different stages of development of the one and the same thought?

Metaphysics and Cosmology

Charvakas assert the supremacy of the inherent nature of a thing (Svabhava-vada). According to Tattva-Sangraha of Shantarakshita, there were two kinds of Svabhava-vadins. Those who were moderate, they allowed causal analysis within certain limits, but did not allow to be carried very far. The extremists repudiated the possibility of discovering the cause of a thing at the very outset of enquiry and maintained that the why of an event or product was due to the doctrine of Svabhava-vada. It seems that this position they took in very distant past–Shvetashvatara Upanishad refers to this doctrine.

What is easy today, was very difficult in those days. So they said that causal principle could not be maintained. Neither perception nor inference was an evidence in support of its existence. They said that

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1. *Rhys davids, Dialogues of Buddha, Vol. 1, p. 168*

mere perception of two events was not sufficient to establish a causal relation between them. To ascertain whether a given antecedent condition had the character of a true cause, it was really necessary to find out with certainty the elements of invariability and relevancy involved in such a notion. But this certitude can never be arrived at. Inference itself having no evidentiary value cannot be a means to the ascertainment of causality.

The moderates maintained that even if there might be a causal relation in the worldly events, it fails to explain the ultimate principles. Therefore they assumed at the very outset that the causes, known or unknown, were all superfluos. The only reasonable stand in such a situation was to say that it was the nature of the thing which caused it to happen in such a form and at such a time. And that was all.

The Charvakas held that there were only four elements in their atomic form. (It is an earlier version. After sometime they are found to be talking of the Pancha Bhootas. That is why there is an idiom popular in Sanskrit–Panchatvam gatah (He went to the fiveness–i.e. to the five elements, i.e. he died.) In Hindi, etc., they say : he got mixed with the five tattvas.

The external world, the sense organs and also the physical organisms were the product of this primordial matter. (How those atoms took different forms? The theists say that god gave them these forms. But they fail to explain as to how he did all. They simply say : god made them so. The atheists too replied in the same way : All emerged as that was the nature (Svabhava) of the things–animate and inanimate. This production resulted from the accidental–characterized by chance–meeting of the blind constitutive particles of matter.

For them life and consciousness were practically one and the same thing, which originated from matter. As feeling and other mental phenomena were material properties, there was no need of distinct immaterial substance as the self or soul. This particular combination of the atoms which resulted in the formation of the organism, that is the self.

That consciousness is a function of the body is proved by the joint method of Agreemnt (Anvaya) and Difference (Vyatireka). If there is body, only then there is consciousness (agreement) and if there is no body, there is no consciousness (difference). In other words, for the manifestation of consciousness body is an inalienable factor and

discarnate consciousness is an impossibility. This shows that there is some necessary bond between organism and consciousness which is no other than body. That is why, when body feels heat, it is said : I feel heat; when body gets tired it is said : I am tired. When one say : 'My body' then he simply uses a figurative language, nothing else is there. Sensations and perceptions can arrive only in so far as they are conditioned by a bodily mechanism. It would not be so were not the body the substrate of consciousness. The fact that particular food and drink described in medical literature proves conducive to the development of the intellectual power, is another proof of the causal relation of body and consciousness.

This theory is called Dehatmavada (body is the soul). Their opponents raised objctions against it :

(1) Since the body is declared to be the agent of all actions, it should he held morally responsible for their natural consequences, but that is not possible because (a) the particles which go to the formation of the body are always in a state of flux, so that the body which performs an action at one moment does no longer persist at the next to feel its reaction. (b) And even if this incessant fluctuation be not admitted, it is nevertheless undeniable that the body suffers change, the bodies in two different periods of life are different from each other, for otherwise they could not have different sizes. The appearance of a different size implies that the former size is destroyed which is possible only when the subject in which it resides is also destroyed.

(2) The material theory is incompetent to account for the facts of memory and recognition. Necessity of thought demands that memory and the original experience, which gives rise to it, should be referred to one and the same conscious subject, but this identity of reference would not be possible if the subject were not fundamentally an unchangeable unity.

To me it appears that the idealists are hydra-headed. They say one thing to refute Charvaka and say another when not refuting him and are leading a religious life.

When a person was caught stealing, only his body was given punishment; though, as they say, his body had undergone change : when he stole, the particles were others and when he was beaten or his hand or leg was cut, the particles were different. In all the Smritis including the Manu Smriti, only body is punished : If a Shudra beats a

Brahman, the king should cut his hand; if he has beaten the Brahman the king should get his leg cut. (Manu Smriti, 8/280).

If crime is not done by the body, why to cut hand or leg? In all the countries, all theists, put the culprits in Jail for several years for committing crimes. Then they do forget what they here argue : the body was another when he committed the crime, but the body in the jail is another body. How are you putting another body in jail? Is that justice?

Body goes on pilgrimage. As a reward that body goes to heaven to enjoy–whether that is the body of a Hindu or a Christian or Muslim. There is no difference. All theists who talk of soul, send their bodies to heaven. What is Resurrection? Whose resurrection is it? It is the ressurection only of body. Those who cut organs of body as punishment, those who put the body of a culprit in Jail and whose bodies resurrect before entering heaven, they talk of only of soul when refuting the Charvakas. That is duplicity or lack of courage to admit what is true.

The Hindus may say that we do not believe in resurrection. No doubt you do not believe so; but when you are in heaven, who enjoys and how enjoys with the prostitutes of paradise? The so-called soul cannot do anything with them. Those who have imagined those prostitutes they were thinking in terms of body only. The Hindu Pitars (ancestors) for whom shraddha is performed, how do they receive and eat the meals? Soul cannot feel hunger. You imagined that they were feeling hungry. That is why Shraddha was originated. It is crystal clear that body feels hunger & you do the Shraddha for the body. The immaterial soul does not come in the picture.

It seems, the Charvakas might have said so. But as their literature is not available, nothing can be said with surety.

Now we reply on the basis of his extant principles. Charvaka does not believe in Adrishta (the invisible system of karma and its fruit), so he finds no justice, natural or moral, in the government of the universe. That being so, the very question of the necessity of logically unifying karma with its fruit (phal) does not appear to him as a problem calling for solution, because Bhoga (the experience of pleasure or pain) is not determined by a previous karma; but that comes by chance over which there is no control or owing to the acts done in the present life. That being so, there is no need of establishing the subjective unity to explain the synthesis of cause and effect particularly with previous karmas and their phals (results).

Even if it were needed we could find it in the unity of the organism. (We know that there is a central nervous system which coordinates information from various areas of the body to produce the body's responses. The cells of this system do no change unlike the other cells of the body. The largest part of brain (cerebrum) is responsible for memory, speech, voluntary behaviors and thought. Recognition testifies to the identity of the body through all its changing states and this recognition cannot be pronounced false as in the case of nails pared and renewed, for there is no chance here of the body being once destroyed and then substituted by a fresh one of a similar kind. The fact of recognition brought forward as subversive of the alleged momentariness of an object appearing as one in consciousness is fatal also to the mutability of the organism.

So far as the second objection is concerned, that can be easily got over by supposing that the traces (Samskaras) left by previous experiences are capable of being transmitted from the prior moment to the succeeding moment i.e. from the material cause down to its direct product.

As to how this may be possible, the Charvaka says, it is analogous to the transference of the odour of musk to the cloth in contact with it. What is necessary is the presence of a relation between the two objects. But in the case of a cause and its effect, such a relation does undoubtedly exist. The unity of reference may also be ensured by the admission that the impressions are preserved and revived in a single line or causal series.

There are three other materialist schools : (a) According to this school self is identified with the sense organs; (b) self is identified with principle of life, (c) self is identified with mind.

To me it appears that the Charvakas started from identifying self with body; then at next step they identified it with sense organs; then with Pramas and finally they identified it with mind. Scholars mistook these evolutionary stages as sects or schools. The reason is obvious : what was previously accepted stand, that was found recorded in some ancient books as poorvpaksha and the scholars rushed to declare that a separate sect without applying their mind. They failed to take note of the evolution of the Charvakian philosophy. In this case we must be extra careful as these alternative or progressive thoughts are not found in any ancient book–no fragment regarding their existence is available. Only Sadananda of the 15th century mentions these three alternatives. I suspect

that he simply imagined these alternatives to refute the Charvakas. Our ancient authors were in the habit of imagining all possible alternative for the sake of refutation. In the Charvaka view, material substances such as jar, cloth, etc., are of the nature of collections (संघाट/Samghata).

According to the Nyaya and others, a jar is not a mere collection of earth atoms, but it is made by the atoms gradually following the sequence of the dyad, etc. and is a separate thing in the form of the 'whole' (Avayavin). Charvaka is against this view. He says that it (Jar) is not a separate 'whole'; it is nothing but a group of atoms which are united with one another in a specific manner. It is not of the nature of a 'whole' distinct from the collectivity of the atoms. The nature of other material things is also to be understood in this manner. The Upanishads also repeat what the Charvakas say, when they say that gold and different articles made up of gold are one and the same thing or when they say that clay and all the articles made of clay i.e. pitcher, pot, lamp, cup, are but clay. For them articles are not independent things. They are simply linguistic constructs.

The Charvakas say that atoms are the minutest particles of earth, etc., which are perceptible. The Nyaya view is contary to it : an atom is a part without any further component part and it is imperceptible.

The Charvaka says that although it is the minutest part, it is not partless or without component part. He further says that an atom is proved by perception and has a distinct shape. The Charvakian atom is called a triad in the Nyaya.

According to the Vaisheshika and other view, atoms are eternal. But in the Charvaka view they are not without production and destruction. Therefore, they are not eternal. The Charvaka says, since the eternality and partlessness of a thing cannot be proved by perception, nothing can be admitted to be eternal and partless from the perspective of the only Pramana of perception. He says that a thing can be produced from absolute destruction (niranvaya-vinasha/ निरन्वय-विनाश) or non-existence and production and destruction of the atoms are taking place according to this process.

According to the Charvaka, qualities (e.g. colour, taste, etc.) and actions (e.g. rising, falling, etc.) are only some particular states of the four forms of matter (earth, water, air & fire). In the Nyaya or/and

Vaisheshika view, they (qualities and actions) are admitted to be quite separate entities distinct from the substances of earth, etc., which are their substratum. But in the Charvakian school, these have not been admitted as entities distinct from the substances in which they are located. He further says that it cannot be admitted that there may exist a single universal, called jarness or clothness, residing in each of the innumerable individuals of jar or cloth in all the three divisions of time–past, future and present; because such an entity or common property is not proved by perception.

In the Nyaya-Vaisheshika view, inherence, particularity and non-existence are accepted as distinct realities; but Charvaka does not admit them as distinct realities. He says that although they are not really existent, people continue to carry on various activities on their basis. These are effects of imagination.

Owing to the absence of knowledge regarding the functioning of brain and the Central nervous system, the Charvakas tried to satisfy the queries in this materialistic way–no body in those circumstances could do better than this. The Buddha was also holding such-like ideas–the theory of momentariness had necessitated all this.

The idealists, on the contrary, conjectured soul in the absence of knowledge regarding brain and central nervous system. The explanation based on this absentee but extra part was no better than the one provided by the Charvakas, in the light of modern scientific research, but contrarily it put up road blocks on the road to further research in anotomy, brain and the rest. That is why they are till date attributing thoughts and feelings to heart which has nothing to do with all that because that organ simply sends blood around the body. For them brain is simply an organ that feels headache!

Epistemology : The Charvakas declare that perception (Pratyaksha) is the only way of gaining right knowledge. That was the first stage and this assertion of this school was so strong that the Vedics and idealists not only accepted it but also regurgitated it in their books :

* चक्षुर्वै ऋतम् (Aitareya Brahmana/2/40)

(Eye is the truth; i.e. eye is the means to know reality/truth.)

* सत्यं वै चक्षुः (Shatapatha Brahmana 1-3-1-27).

(The truth is eye i.e. Reality/truth is that which is seen by eye.)

They opposed the validity of Inference when it was presented by some people on the basis that the universal and necessary relation on which it was based could not be discovered. That was an early stage. But later they allowed inference in those cases that were perception-based, as is evident from the Panjika of Kamalasheela on the Tattva Sangraha of Shanta Rakshita of the 8th century, wherein he refers to *Purandara*, who is a writer of the Charvaka school (*charvaka mate granthakarah*) and who says that worldly inference is acceptable if it is perception-based. The inference of fire from the smoke is perception-based. They were of the view that inference falls in the category of probability, not in the category of certainty. But there is no and cannot be perception-based inference regarding the transcendental matters such as hereafter, metempsychosis, etc. So, there is no chance of accepting the existence of those imagined things.

Charvaka is meant for the well-being of the bahujanas–it is the *summum bonum* for the maximum people.

This school believes in Nature, not in god. The various phenomena of the world are produced spontaneously from the nature of things and there is no supernatural creator. The theists say that god is the governor of the world. But what is the benefit of that governor when there are diseases, pain, cruelty etc. They say that all this is due to the previous Karmas of the people; others say that is fate written by god or some mysterious power. If god cannot remove all that or if he removes only of his Bhaktas (devotees) or if he removes only of those whom he likes or upon whom he throws his grace, then it is better not to have a god than to have a cruel or partial god who is enemy of the maximum people. The Charvakas say that ruler/king/constitutional head of the state, may be called 'Ishvara' (Lord), otherwise there is no Ishvara (god).

Knowledge

The Charvakas believe that knowledge is located in the body. When the working body i.e. the sense-organs in working order are present, knowledge too is present; but in the absence of the working order of the body/sense organs, knowledge too becomes absent. By this conformity to agreements in presence (Anvaya) and absence (vyatireka) between the sense-organs and knowledge, it becomes crystal clear that all the instances of knowledge acquired by us are located only in the body/sense organs.

Now the medical science has proved them right as today we know that brain is the main organ to acquire and store knowledge. When brain is impaired, knowledge is no more. When body is burnt after death, there remains no organ, no means, for knowledge. Everything comes to an end (Parinirvana) with the disposal of the body. Therefore it is futile to say that he or she collected knowledge in the so-called previous births or he or she has the memory of the so-called previous birth.

According to this school, knowledge is divided into two classes– (1) apprehension (Anubhava), (2) recollection (Smaraṇa).

Apprehension is further divided into two classes–perception (Pratyaksha) and assumption (Kalpana).

Perception is the knowledge acquired by the five sense-organs (visual, gustatory, olfactory, cutaneous and auditory) respectively of colour, taste, smell, touch and sound. The knowledge of colour etc; which is not contradicted by a subsequent knowledge, is called valid knowledge (Pramana). Therefore the sense-organs, the eyes, etc., are called the instruments of valid knowledge. All other forms of knowledge which are neither valid knowledge nor recollection, would be assumption i.e. inferential or verbal knowledge regarding the invisible or transcendent things : knowledge derived through postulation and non-apprehension is included in inferential knowledge. Therefore that would be of the nature of assumption.

According to this school, inference, etc. are not certain forms of knowledge as far as the object-part (vishayamsha/विषयांश) is concerned. It provides a second class knowledge. It is mostly guess work (From smoke, people infer the existnce of fire. By experience they have known that there is invariable relation between them). The Charvakas think that since there is no firm conviction as regards the knowledge of invariable relation from which proceeds inferential knowledge, we cannot have a firm belief in the validity of inference. The Charvakas, therefore, have included inference under assumption or probability.

The verbal testimony (Shabda pramana) too is a form of assumption, because even though it may be known in that way, one does not have total reliance upon such a form of knowledge as long as it is not known perceptually. After listening to the statement 'one desirous of heaven should perform sacrifice' (स्वर्गकामो यजेत्), the listener thinks that

sacrifice (Yajna) is a means to attain heaven. In spite of this, since it is not perceptually known that any man has ever attained heaven by performing the sacrifice because there is neither anyway to ascertain nor can one reach there to see for himself if the sacrificer has reached there as no one can reach there alive, so one cannot put sufficient faith upon such knowledge. So such statements, so far as they convey their meaning, are to be taken as traditional hearsay (Aitihya), not the source of valid knowledge.

No statement is valid in itself (स्वत: प्रमाण). Only if the objects referred to by a statement can be grasped by perception, can that statement be taken as valid. The Vedas speak of heaven, etc. These things cannot be perceived. Therefore, such Vedic statement cannot be means of valid knowledge. So they are included in the Aitihya (traditional hearsay).

The knowledge derived through Postulation (Arthapatti Pramana) is of the nature of assumption. When a certain meaning of the word does not apply properly in a context, we assume new meaning of it. This is presumptive knowledge. In such cases even the knower of that knowledge himself knows that his knowledge is a kind of assumption, when he says : 'I presume such a meaning.'

When the Mimansakas say : performance of sacrifice produces Adrishta in the person concerned which ultimately causes him attain heaven, their statement does not become valid knowledge. Since the basis of their postulation is only traditional hearsay or a culture specific, the Charvakas characterize it as assumption.

Thus inference, comparison, verbal testimony, postulation and non-apprehension have not been accepted as sources of valid knowledge in this school.

Perception is the only source of valid knowledge. Perception is that which has for its object (vishaya) an uncontradicted thing. One seated in a fast-moving vehicle sees trees on the road running,but the man on the road does not see them running . To prevent the definition from applying in such cases, the qualifying expression 'uncontradicted' has been added.

According to the Charvakian view, all perceptual knowledge is indeterminate (nirvikalpaka). It reveals only the mere nature of a thing. The actual nature of a thing has no real connection with a name or a

universal. Although the names are of the nature of sound, and therefore their nature is determined by auditory perception and so are not unreal/ non-entities, yet the names which are of the nature of sound, have no real connection with the things as the names of which they are used. These sounds i.e. words cannot have any relation with things like a jar, cloth, etc. which are situated at different places. Therefore when people understand a thing by associating it with a name in the form 'it is a jar' (ghatha) or 'it is a cloth (pata)' then that awareness is only a kind of assumption. That is why in the word 'jar' we cannot keep water or with the word cloth, we cannot make a shirt. The universals–jarness, clothness (घटत्व, पटत्व) are imaginary by nature. What is a universal? It is an assumption of the same kind on the basis of some common points in a number of material bodies which are totally different from one another. There are twenty students in a class, the studentship of them or the sameness of them as students is an assumption, because each one of them is different almost in every respect except that they are all students. This is how the universal has been postulated. Hence by their very nature, they are the product of imagination.

Therefore when people understand a thing by associating it with a universal, they only assume. It is said, therefore, that determinate knowledge (by which the individual is revealed as related to name, universals etc.) is only a form of assumption (Kalpana), not perception.

Illusionary knowledge is explained by the Charvakas with reference to Asat-khyati (awareness of the non-existent). They say that when a shell appears as silver, it is due to some defect in the form of darkness or distance. That is why one fails to comprehend the shell as the shell and finds in it similarities with silver–brightness, whiteness, etc. Later on with the help of ignorance i.e. the absence of the knowledge of shellness (in the shell) and the knowledge of similarity (with silver), he imagines the shell, referred to as 'this', to be silver. Therefore that silver–produced by imagination–cannot be anything other than a non-entity or unreal.

It is to be noted here that according to this view, in certain cases, an illusory knowledge may have something real as well for its object. For example, a person seated in a fast-moving vehicle finds the trees etc. standing on the sides, moving at the same speed as the vehicle. Though the moving of the trees is illusory knowledge because actually they are

not moving, yet the movement of the trees is not something produced by imagination as was the case of shell-silver illusion. The movement of the vehicle which is perceptible to the man seated in it is revealed as related to the trees etc. due to some defect. Here only the relation is imaginary. The movement is related to the vehicle, not to the trees; yet the man sitting in it assumes that it is related to the trees.

Mind and Mental Perception

The realist schools of Nyaya, Vaisheshika and others believed that mind was a separate sense-organ, but the Charvakas did not accept it a separate sense-organ. (Now it has been proved that mind is not an organ. On the contrary, it is a function of brain/central nervous system). Therefore, in the Charvakian school, there is really nothing which may be called mental perception. According to this school, the part of the sense-organ called 'skin' situated inside the body would be the mind or the internal sense-organ. Pleasure or pain are a kind of tactual experience. Desire or aversion is also of that nature.

Recollection :. Nyaya school says that an impression produced by a previous experience is the cause of recollection. But this school does not accept that. The Charvakas say : Because of its peculiar nature, recollection never has for its object an unknown thing. Due to different kinds of physical stimulations occuring in the sense-organ, people recollect things previously experienced. Those modifications (Vikaras) of the sense-organ cannot be taken as contributing factors for the production of recollection by framing a general rule, for from the same kind of modification of the sense-organ, the same form of recollection is not invariably produced. One particular modification of the sense-organ may produce the recollection of a jar; but that does not mean that in the event of such a modification in all the cases one would recollect a jar, one may sometimes even recollect a cloth. Therefore by framing a general rule, no cause-effect relation can be established between the modificacion of the sense-organ and recollection.

Sense-organs act after reaching the object. According to the Charvakas, three sense-organs are prapyakarin (they come into contact & after that they reveal their objects). They are gustatory, the olfactory and the cutaneous. Taste cannot be known if the thing is not connected with the tongue i.e. the gustatory sense organ. Smell can come from a distance, what when the air carrying that substance reaches the olfactory

sense-organ i.e. when the substance and the sense-organ are connected, only then smell is felt of what it is. Likewise when we touch something i.e. when thing and sense-organ are connected, we feel, know, if that is hard or soft and hot or cold.

In this view, the eyeball itself is the visual sense-organ. In the Nyaya view, the visual sense-organ has been admitted as a special kind of substance of the nature of fire, imperceptible and located in the eyeball. The Charvakas say, no such separate substance is located in the eyeball. Therefore, Charvaka says that the visual organ of each living being who possesses two eyeballs would be two in number.

The Nyaya says that when we see a thing i.e. a jar, our eyes come in the contact of the Jar. But actually there is no such thing as contact, because in the present of light, the light waves reflected off from the object reach our eyes and form an image on retina at the back of our eyes. (The lens present in our eye refracts the reflected light from the object and forms a real and inverted image on the retina. There are photoreceptor cells called rods and cones on the retina. The cones provide the eye's colour sensitivity and the rods are responsible for vision at low light levels.) The optic nerve transfers visual information from the retina to *vision centres of brain* via electrical impulses. It is clear from this process that *eye does not come into contact with the object. What we see is the reflected image of the object and light is not in the eye. Light is reflected from the object & reaches our eyes.*

Likewise, our ears–the hole or/and auris externa (external ear)–do not hear. Our ears do not come into contact as a pinch of salt comes into contact of tongue. It is not that the word goes in the hole and the canal and we hear.

Sound waves, which are vibrations, enter through the outer ear and reach the middle ear to vibrate the eardrum. The eardrum then vibrates the ossicles (3 small bones) in the middle ear and passes them into the inner ear. *Then the brain tells you that you are hearing a sound and what that sound is : it is brain that tells which vibration is of which word.*

Ethics

It is rightly said that almost all the philosophical schools of India are pessimists. That is why they sprint to Mokha (liberation) from the very beginning. They hold that evil is the very essence of existence; that the

world is a vale of tears and there is nowhere peace and happiness. But the Charvaka is optimistic. They say–let us enjoy pleasure and pleasure alone, avoiding sorrow and misery. To enjoy life is the purpose of life. *That is their uniqueness in the Indian philosophy.*

The idealists say that the worldly pleasure is tainted with sorrow. That being so, how can it be the aim of life. To them Charvakas say that : should we flingaway sheaves of paddy, rich with the finest white grains, because they are covered with husk and dust?

When Charvaka says that pleasure is the aim of life, then all the different and warring Indian philosophical schools unaninrously attack and abuse him. In their cacophony, what one understands is this : Pleasure is a profane thing, totally degraded and abominable. So, charvaka too is abominable rogue (धूर्त).

These pious cows either have not read their 'holy' Vedic books or are they victims of amnesia. A person who is not ignorant and who is not suffering from amnesia cannot take that stand which they take so brazenly.

In the Vedic books, particularly the Upanishads, we find their Rishis clamouring from the tops of their cottages that pleasure is Brahman–the greatest achievable goal.

आनंदो ब्रह्मेति व्यजानात्। आनन्दाद्ह्येव खल्विमानि भूतानि जायन्ते, आनन्देन जातानि जीवन्ति, आनन्दं प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्तीति. सैषा भार्गवी वारुणी विद्या, परमे व्योमन्प्रतिष्ठिता. (तैत्तिरीय उप. 3/6)

(He came to know that Brahman is pleasure (Ananda). For truly, beings are born here from pleasure; when born, they live by pleasure and into pleasure, when departing, they enter pleasure. This wisdom of Bhrigu and Varuna is established in the highest heaven.)

* रसौ वै सः, रसं ह्येवायं लब्ध्वानन्दी भवति. (तै.उप. 2/7)

Pleasure, verily, is the essence of existence. For, truly, on getting the pleasure, one becomes blissful–extremely happy.

* आनन्दं ब्रह्मणो विद्वान्, न बिभेति कुतश्चनेति, (तै.उप. 2/9)

He who knows the pleasure of Brahman fears not from anything at all.

All these references from the Upanishads seem to be echoing the Charvakian spirit is a loud way. The idealists and the Vaidikas try in

vain to show that this pleasure is not terrestrial, it is celestial, whereas the Charvakian pleasure is terrestrial.

This is contrary to the facts and the spirit of the Rishis, who were seekers after truth. They had the courage to call a spade a spade. They open-heartedly concurred with the Charvaka on the point that pleasure is the aim of life. They did not liken this pleasure with any celestial thing. On the contrary, they likened it with the embrace of the beloved woman.

The Brihadaranyaka Upanishd categorically says :

तद्यथा प्रियया **स्त्रिया संपरिष्वक्तो** न बाह्यं किंचन वेद
नान्तरमेवमेवायं पुरुषः प्राज्ञेनात्मना संपरिष्वक्तो न बाह्यं
किंचन वेद नान्तरम् (बृहदारण्यक उप. 4/3/21)

As a man when in the embrace of his beloved woman knows nothing without or within, so the person when in the embrace of the intelligent self, knows nothing without or within.

In the light of Upanishadic statements, all the assertions of the above-said Vedic philosophers are totally wrong. On the contrary, the Upanishads repeat certain doctrins of Charvaka, almost, *verbatim*.

After performing all sorts of religious actrobatics where a theist goes? They say : to heaven/paradise. What is there? Houris (women), wine and other pleasures. If after so much hard work you only get pleasure in heaven, why does that bite you on the earth, when the Charvakas declare it to be the aim of life?

They say : the pleasures of heaven are refined and of better quality. To them it is said : you say this world is created by god. Has your that god created here fake pleasures? How do you know pleasures of heaven are of better quality? Wine and women supposed to be supplied there are just wine and women, what is the meaning of better quality? If you are to run after the so-called better quality, why has your god created pleasures on the earth and are also made by your god? Why not enjoy those pleasures that are available on the earth and are also allegedly made by your god? To reject what is present in the hope of getting better quality in heaven, which is uncertain, is foolish because in this way you damage your self interest and they say : Svartha Bhransho he moorkhata–स्वार्थभ्रंशो हि मूर्खता i.e. he is a fool of the first water who damages his own self-interest.

Charvaka says : Men do not refrain from sowing rice because there are wild animals to devour it, nor do they refuse to set cooking pots on the fire, because there are beggars to pester them for a share of the contents. Should we refrain from plucking fruits as there are thorns in them?

Unmixed happiness is not available in the world, so we should enjoy mixed happiness which is available. There is no meaning in breast-beating that there is no unmixed pleasure. To avoid what is available in the hope of uncertain and imaginary pleasure is a bad bargain–a deal which is not advantageous.

Even if there is pain, it is comparatively lesser than pleasure. That is why people parroting 'pain' 'pain' do not commit sucide en masse. Even those who renounce the world for attaining unmixed pleasure and who pose to be doing Bhakti, Penance, etc. run towards the homes of those for alms, donations etc. who are satisfied with the mixed available pleasure. If they are inferior people because their aims of life are not as higher, as you say, as your are, why do you beg food from them to survive and why do you expect donations from them? All those who do nothing to earn their bread and butter and pretend to be wholly devouted to the celestial pleasure are parasites of the first water. It seems their search for celestial pleasure is an excuse for freeloading. People should not give alms to such vagabonds who are selfishly searching for the so-called celestial pleasure that will be enjoyed, if ever found, exclusively by the persons who are freeloading and the society will get nothing from those whom they are fattening.

The Charvakas are practically unique philosophers. All the peoples of the world are practically following them unconsciously, though from their mouths they may be calling themselves as theists. That is why the author of the Sarva-darshana-Sangrah says that this philosophy of Charvaka (Lokayata darshana) is meant fcr the benefit/well-being of the maximum people–or bahujana : बहूनां प्राणिनामनुग्रहार्थम्.

Old Testment of Western Atheism

While it is true that in the past (and until quite recently) there was a religious or supernatural interpretation of the world, it must not be overlooked that there has existed at certain periods of our intellectual and cultural history a number of thinkers and schools who have consciously rejected such an interpretation and held a naturalistic view of the world. The naturalistic outlook has a consistency which makes it a genuine and alternative way of looking at the world from that which has inspired the religious believer.

Charles B. Upton says that 'the history of it (atheism) is little more than a collection of instances in which doubt and negation in regard to some essential element in theism have arisen.' Much of theism can be understood only in the light of the current theism which it was concerned to reject. Such atheism is relative and this is as true in the case of western atheism as it is in the case of Indian atheism. That is why Indian atheists are rejecting the Vedas, the Shraddha and caste system. These items were not on the theistic agenda of the western people, so the western atheists are not found to be challenging such-like things and concepts. Western atheists are challenging the divinity of the heavenly bodies, because theists were believing them divine beings. The relative atheisms of the east and the west have their own importance. It is obvious that naturalistic or absolute atheism is both fundamentally more important, and more interesting because it represents one polarity in the development of the human spirit.

The Pre-Socratic period

The dialogue of religion with atheism is very old. Therefore we must begin from where European speculation began, i.e. with that awakening of the philosohical spirit among the Ionian physical philosophers during the early part of the sixth century BC. (This philosophy is called Ionian as it was begun by Thales and his successors at Miletus, one of the Greek colonies on the coast of Asia Minor. For this reason they are also referred to as the Milesian philosophers). Then philosophers are termed 'physical philosophers', because their primary concern was with

the nature of what they called 'becoming' i.e. with the way in which the world works, though they were also led from this to ask further questions about the world's ultimate origin, and to the postulation of some primary substance out of which the plurality of things, which we now observe in the world, came into being.

These philosophers were under the influence of the Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Theogonic writings of Hesiod. The spirit of the age and the cultural background of the time and place in which they lived also played an important role. Prof. W.K.C. Guthrie writes ; Its (of Miletus) high standard of living was too obviously the product of human energy, resource and initiative for it to acknowledge any great debt to the gods. The poetry of the Ionian Mimnermus was an appropriate expression of its spirit in the late 7th century. To him it seemed that, if there were gods, they must have more sense than to trouble their heads about human affairs. From the gods we know neither good nor evil. The poet looked inward, at human life itself. The philosopher of the same period and society looked outward to the world of nature, and matched his human wits against its secrets. Both are intelligible products of the same material culture, and the same secular spirit.[1]

The partial rationalization of the myths of the traditional religion, begun by the writers of the Theogonies such as Hesiod, also played its part to influence the philosophers.

Philosophy began, when 'the conviction began to take shape in men's minds that the apparent chaos of events must conceal underlying order, and that this order is the product of impersonal forces.[2] This gave rise to a form of explanation of events in the world in sharp contrast to that offered by the traditional polytheistic religion, which may be called mythological.[3] The issue which the Milesian philosophers raise in rejecting such an explanation is basic to the debate between belief and unbelief both in their day and ours.

Mythology says that the events in the world occur as the result of the activity of higher wills and are the result of personal forces pitted against to our own. So also with human passions which often come upon us and appear to possess us not by, but against, our will. Here

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1. *W.R.C. Guthrie, History of Greek Philosophy, Vol. 1, p. 30*
2. *Ibid, p. 26*
3. *James Thrower, A Short History of Western Atheism, p. 9*

too the mythological writers had a ready explanation : an ouslaught of love was the work of Aphrodite; musical and artistic inspiration was the work of Apollo; wisdom in a man was the gift of Athene and folly occurred because Zeus had taken away a man's wits.

The breaking away from this way of interpreting events in the world, constitutes the real innovation of the Ionian philosophers. Thus they were the first representatives of that understanding of the world upon which our contemporary culture rests.

As Prof. Guthrie puts it : 'Under the influence of the earliest philosophical thing the "Father of gods and men" and his divine family were dissolved into an impersonal "necessity", an affair of natural laws and the interaction of "airs, ethers, waters and other strange things", as Socrates calls them in the Phaedo.[1]

The Milesian philosophers were familiar with the mathematics of the Egyptians and the Babylonians and with the use to which the latter put their knowledge in predicting the movements of the heavenly bodies which were at that time regarded by the Greek theists as divine persons. Thales successfully used this acquired knowledge to predict the eclipse of 585 B.C. That established that the world was governed by law, and not by divine caprice.

There are many natural philosophers before Socrates, who were designated *Atheoi* (Atheists) or accused of impiety. Among them are included Xenophanes, Anaxagoras, Diogenes of Apollonia, Hippo of Rhegium, Protagoras, Prodicus, Critias and Diagoras of Melos. They all were accused of atheism because they were naturalistic philosophers and Naturalism/atheism was striking at the roots of the beliefs of the contemporary theists.

Xenophanes is best known for attacking current anthropomorphic conceptions of the gods in a satirical but serious way. He says : Men believe that the gods are clothed and shaped and speak like themselves. If oxen and horses and lions could draw and paint, they would delineate their gods in their own image. The Negroes believe that their gods are flat nosed and black; the Thracians that their gods have blue eyes and red hair.

It means that all imagine their gods in their own image. As the gods are an imaginary thing, so they have no fixed form.

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1. *Guthrie, op.cit., p. 27*

As Jaeger points out, Xenophanes goes beyong what we know of them (gods) in that he not only explicitly criticized the anthropomorphism of the old religion but attacked the moral implications of it as well. He and Hesiod 'say that the gods do all manner of things which men would consider disgraceful–adultery, stealing, deceiving on another.' (Frag. 11). It is also worth nothing that Xenophanes rejected divination. 'This is of a piece with his rejection of mythology and paves the way for naturalistic explanation of this phenomenon which we come across in the medical writers of the latter part of the fifth century.[1]

Then there is Empedocles. The Roman Epicurean poet-philosopher Lucretius says that he was a materialist. We can say that his reputation as a materialist rests on the fragments of the epic poem *On Nature.*

Anaxagoras, a contemporary of Empedocles, did much to further the development of the naturalistic way of viewing events in the world. He opposed the diviners and priests and sought for an explanation in terms of natural causes. He was banished from Athens some few years before the birth of Plato because he held that the heavently bodies were natural objects. He said that the sun was simply a glowing stone in the sky.

Diogenes of Apollonia, a contemporary of Anaxagoras, takes this argument a stage further. According to him, the single primary substance is *air*. He says–'I feel that this (air) is god, and that it extends everywhere and disposes all things and is contained in all things.'

He was accused by later writers not only of impiety but also of atheism.

The Socratic Period

Socrates belongs to the latter part of the 5th century BC. In that period the conflict between the newly developed natural philosophy and the traditional religion becomes open and explicit. The line of criticism begun by Xenophanes about a century ago, came to fore in the plays of Euripides and Sophocles. In passage after passage the doings of the gods, as recorded in Homer, are the subject of moral disapproval. Lowes Dickinson says that the attitude of Euripides towards the popular religion 'is so frankly critical that (...) his main object in the construction of his dramas was to discredit the myths he selected for his theme.[2]

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1. *James Thrower, op.cit., p. 19*
2. *G. Lowes Dickinson, The Greek View of Life, p. 48*

In the Clouds by Aristophanes the debate continues through a naturalistic explanation of the causes of other events in nature and the suggestion is further made that the atheist who offers such an explanation is anti-social and immoral. But this brings out well the type of explanation in terms of physical causes operating according to necessity which the new philosophy of nature was putting forward in opposition to the explanations of the traditional religious mythology.

Further evidence of the widespread nature of the empirical and naturalistic way of explaining events in the middle of the 5th century B.C. is provided by the medical writers of the period whose works have come down to us under the name of Hippocrates. In that period epilepsy was called sacred disease. But in one of the most well-known treatises of this school of Hippocrates, 'On the nature of the Sacred Disease', the author inquires into the so-called divine origin of this disease and raises thereby some important questions about the nature of the divine and the mode of its operation. He categorically disposes of the mythological idea that epilepsy is the direct result of divine activity and seeks to account for it as being the result of the same kind of natural causes as are other diseases. 'The so-called sacred disease arises from the same causes as any others : from the things that enter the body and those that leave it : from cold, and sunshine, and winds, which are always changing and are never still. These things are divine; and so there is no need of setting this disease apart and considering it more divine than the others : they are all divine and they are all human.'[1]

In those days, war was attributed to gods and supernatural elements. That is why we find in Homer and Herodotus natural and supernatural causation operating side by side; but we find nothing of this in Thucydides who eliminated the supernatural element completely and records an account of the war in ordinary terms. Drachmann says in this regard : Not only did he throughout ignore omens and divinations, except in so far as they played a part as a purely psychological factor, but he completely omitted a reference to the gods in his narrative. Such a procedure was at this time unprecedented.[2]

The middle of the 5th century BC, was the age of the Sophists. While with them interest shifted away from the object of knowledge

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1. *Hippocrates, On the Sacred Disease, chapter 21*
2. *A.B. Drachmann, Atheism in Pagan Antiquity, p. 28.*

to the subject, from the external world to the life of man in society, the scepticism of the age was in them even more pronounced. They subjected the foundations of the traditional structure of society in religion and morality to searching chriticism. Prof. Armstrong describes their beliefs as those of 'a humanistic agnosticism'.[1]

Protagoras expresses their outlook when he declares that *'man is the measure of all things, of the reality of those which are, and of the unreality of those which are not.'* This saying has been taken to themselves ever since by the apostles of Humanism. Protagoras is frankly agnostic with regard to the question of the existence of the gods.

Contact with other cultures had made the Greeks aware for sometime that their own culture, with its religion and morality; with its political and social organisation, was not unique, even though it might be superior to them. So, reflecting on the diversity of beliefs in the world, they were led to ask whether religion, morality and social structure were inherent in the nature of things so that there was one true from of them or whether they were simply the outcome of custom and therefore relative and subject to change. Were there things of nature or of law? *The Sophists unhesitatingly declared that religon, morality and society were simply a matter of man-made customs.*

This conviction allowed them not only to attack religion, but to go one step further and offer a naturalistic account of its origin.

One of the most important of the Sophists, Prodicus of Cos, puts forward the view (to which both Euripides and the stoical writer Lucilus Balbus later refer) that the ideas of the gods arose as an act of gratitude and adoration on man's part towards the beneficent powers of nature. Thus the earliest gods for Prodicus were such ones as Ceres (Goddess of the harvest, of the spring); Liber (freedom, Phloem in botany), Demeter (the Greek goddess of the harvest, grain and fertility) and Dionysus (the ancient Greek god of wine, winemaking, grape cultivation, fertility, theater and ecstasy).

Critias in his now lost drama Sisyphus, holds what may be termed as the 'policeman' theory of the gods. He says that they were invented as moral authorities to end lawlessness. The Sophists held that laws were the creation of the arbitrary will of rulers. So they contrasted this with natural justice in which the will of the stronger prevailed. It was held

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1. *A.H. Armstrong, Introduction to Ancient Philosophy, p. 23*

by them, therefore, that men would act differently in the absence of any possibility of detection–when there is no witness. So, Critias says that the gods were invented as hidden witnesses to acts done in private in order to provide the necessary coersion without which morality would disintegrate.

An other thinker who offers us a naturalistic theory of origin of religion is the Atomist Democritus. He was not a Sophist, because he retained much of the old Ionian and post-Parmenidean interest in nature and natural processes.

He rejected divinity either outside of or within nature. Says Jaeger, 'His description of nature in terms of the interplay of countless atoms in empty space ruled by the power of chance left no room for teleology and the deification of any moving forces or single primal ground.'[1]

In Democritus we have an explicit statement of what, as F.M. Cornford puts it, 'the philosophers call materialism and religious people call theism.'[2]

His other theory of the origin of religion is that it arises from man's awe and fear of the wonders of nature. He believed, as many today believe, that once the natural origin of these was fully understood, religious belief would be seen to be unfounded.

Democritus did not believe in any life after death. He said that everything in nature was subject to decay and dissolution.

Diagoras of Melos became an atheist, not from speculation but from the experience of having lost a manuscript. He prayed to gods for the recovery of the lost manuscript but all in vain. His faith in gods died and he became an atheist. He was condemned to death in 415 BC in Athens having been arrested for scoffing at the eleusinian Mysteries : (the annual rites that were performed by the ancient Greeks at the village of Eleusis near Athens in honour of Demeter and Persephone).

This is the survey of unbelief in the Pre-Socratic and Socratic period–a period of two centuries from the beginning of the 6th to the end of the 5th century BC. Here we see that from the Ionians onwards the development of a naturalism which reaches its zenith in the Atomism of Democritus and which in the latter part of the 5th century is reinforced by the relativistic criticism of the Sophists.

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1. *W. Jaeger, The Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers, p. 180*
2. *F.M. Cornford, Before and After Socrates, p. 27*

The Hellenistic Period

The Hellenistic age (the age when the culture and civilization of Greece, following in the wake of Alexander of Macedon's conquests, breaks out of the confines of its native environment and comes to dominate the thinking of the Mediterranean world). sees the rise of four great schools of philosophical thought which more or less successfully challenge the Platonic and Aristotelian schools. These are : (1) the Stoic, (2) the Cynic, (3) the Epicurean and (4) the Sceptical.

The Stoic school was pantheistic and a peculiar blend of Platonic thought about providence, a good deal of Aristotle, and a language reminiscent of the Ionian doctrine of 'living stuff'. It taught, that all men participate in god or Divine by means of their reason–the divine spark (the *logos spermatikos*)–which is within them. Therower says : On the whole the Stoic influence was in the field of morality, where, as time went by, its morality freed itself from its theological grounding, it eventually came to dominate the field and influence some of the best minds of late antiquity.[1]

The Cynic school, founded by Diogenes of Sinope, a contemporary of Aristotle, was primarily a way of life based on the doctrine that virtue (interpreted as life according to nature) is the one thing that matters and that all else is *tuphos* (wind.)

It is on record that Diogenes did not take part in the worship of the gods because he held that the gods were in need of nothing. The Cynic attitude is best described as one of indifference on religious matters and as such it can be described as practically atheistic though theoretically agnostic.

The Epicurean school is generally equated with Indian Charvakian school. Many people have looked back to it as one of the great humanistic and secular philosophies of Antiquity. Lucretius of the first century B.C., looks back to Epicurus (d. 270 BC) the founder of Epicurean philosophy and hails him as the great liberator of the human spirit from the yoke of the superstitions of religion in these words : When human life lay grovelling in all men's sight, crushed to the earth under the dead weight of superstition whose grim features loured menacingly upon mortals from the four quarters of the sky, a man of Greece was the first to raise mortal eyes in defiance, first to stand erect and brave

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1. *James Thrower, op.cit., p. 35*

the challenge. Fables of the gods did not crush him, nor the lightning flash and the growing menace of the sky. Rather they quickened his manhood, so that he, first of all men, longed to smash the constraining locks of the nature's doors. The vital vigour of his mind prevailed. He ventured far out beyond the flaming ramparts of the world and voyaged in mind throughout infinity. Returning victorious, he proclaimed to us what can be and what cannot : how a limit is fixed to the power of everything and in immovable frontier post. Therefore, superstition in its turn lies crushed beneath his feet, and we by his triumph are lifted level with the skies.[1]

Epicurus' philosophical interests are, like those of the Stoics, primarily moral and, he, like them, sought for a way of living which would, amidst the troubled times in which he lived, produce *ataraxia* (imperturbability) and *apatheia* (peace).

With this moral search he combined the old Ionian interest in nature and made the latter, as it developed into Atomism, the basis of the former. According to him, there were two enemies of inner calmness of mind and emotion–they were the superstitions of religion : fear of gods and of what might await one after death. He found in the Atomism of Democritus a philosophy which, with its materialistic outlook, excluded just those sources of so much pain and trouble. Thus embracing the materialism of Democritus, Epicurus could draw from his naturalistic picture of the world peace and self-reliance. His philosophy is atheistic to all intents and purposes.

The 4th school was of the Sceptics. Many people have looked back to it because in many respcets, when taken in conjunction with the scepticism of the Middle Platonic Academy, it is the precursor of a scepticism which was revived at the Renaissance and again in the 18th century by David Hume : the philosophical tradition which he initiated and which survives as one of the dominating philosophical approaches of today.

The origins of this school go back to Pyrrho of Elis, a contemporary of Aristotle. It is from him that the term *Pyrrhonism* (scepticism) is derived.

Pyrrho himself has left us no exposition of his views. It is from his disciple, Timon of Phlius, that his views have come down to us.

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1. *Lucretius, De Rerum Natura, tr. by R.E. Latham, Penguin Classics, p. 29.*

According to him, nothing can be known with complete certainty, so one should neither affirm nor deny anything. This led him to take an agnostic position with regard to religious belief.

As Pyrrho's scepticism was motivated primarily by the seach for tranquillity, so he believed in perfect suspension of judgment. This form of scepticism was revived by Aenesidemus in the first century BC and it produced in the secomd century C.E. 'that fine flowering of ancient scepticism that we find in Sextus Empiricus."[1]

Arcesilaus introduced sceptical doctrines into the Platonic Academy towards the opening of the 2nd century BCE. Unlike the scepticism of Pyrrho, it is characterized by a more thoroughly destructive dialectical spirit. While initially it was used against the arguments of the Stoics–known to the Sceptics as 'the Dogmatists'–as a weapon it was capable being adapted for use against all forms of dogmatism–philosophical and religious. So Arcesilaus founded the second or Middle Academy–as it is known.

It appears that he was led from his criticism of the Stoic criteria of truth to maintain that there could not be any criteria of truth and so there was no certainty with regard to anything. The most he could in that situation hope for was probability, what he termed *ta euloga* (the reasonable). He was not facing the Vedists, the Quranists etc. But the weapon is lethal, no doubt.

Carneades of Cyrene (213-129 BCE), was his successor. Both Cicero and Sextus Empiricus, two later sceptics, have shed light on his views. According to him, there could be no certainty with regard to religious belief as with regard to anything else. "But Carneades' criticism of religion," says Prof Thrower, "and of theism in particular, went far deeper than this and in one respect at least he anticipates a discussion with reference to the concept of God which is still very much alive in contemporary criticism of theism today."[2]

It be noted here that Stoic theology was not unlike Christian theology, which indeed it influenced, in many vital respects. Integral to them both is a teleological theory of the universe based upon a belief in and his providential care for man and the ordering of events in the world to this end. This version of Stoics was criticized by Carneades.

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1. *James Thrower, op.cit., p. 38*
2. *James Thrower, op.cit., p. 39*

The first argument in the Stoic's apologia is–there is evidence of theism's universality. Carneades says countering it–if belief in the gods is universal why bother to rest it on argument and risk suggesting that it might indeed be a matter for debate? Carneades means to say that your resting it on argument exposes the falsehood of your assertion. If it were universal, there was no need to support it with arguments. When the sun rises, no one proves that with arguments because of its universality. You are trying to prove what you call as universal. That proves the opposite i.e. what you call universal, is not universal in reality. That is why crutches are needed.

While himself doubting the fact of the universality of the belief, what, should its unniversality be granted, Carneades asked, is proved? All that would be proved is the sociological or anthropological fact that men believe in the existence of gods; but further argument is needed to show that the gods, in fact, do exist, because one can believe in anything; even in a non-existent thing. So mere belief in gods does not prove their existence.

He further says that *questions of truth are not to be decided by plebiscite, by counting heads*.

The evidence for theism (polytheism) drawn from the appearances of the gods to men and from divination is also refuted by him. He says that to talk of similarity is little more than old wives' tales.

Then he refutes divination by saying that if it were a way of foretelling events it would rest on rational principles and not upon routine and tradition. As it stands, it is little more than a hit or miss affair owing nothing to divine inspiration.

Carneads believes that belief in the existence of the gods arose, for the most part, from the deification of awe-inspiring natural phenomena. But he also says the *question of the origin of a belief tells nothing of itself about the validity of that belief.* (It means, if we know that gods arose from that phenomena, it does not, in anyway, validate their existence or it does not becomes mandatory for us to believe in them or worship them. It also does not become proof of their existence). Carneades is here making a point : we must distinguish between *'reasons'* and *'causes'* with regard to the beliefs that people hold. The causes only become interesting and important, as a means of accounting for a person holding the belief that he does, when we have come to the conclusion

that, irrespective of the causes, there are no reasons that might justify the holding of that belief.[1]

He argues that the concept of God, at least as put forward by the Stoics, is not only false, but also meaningless; because it is self-contradictory/internally inconsistent. But his arguments are not confinable simply to the stoic conception of the deity. As Mr. R.D. Hicks has pointed out, 'this acute thinker used arguments which go much further than this and bring to light the fundamental difficulties in any conception of God, whether he be conceived as personal or impersonal, finite or infinite or veiled under some abstraction as the absolute or the unconditioned.[2]

What Carneades argued is that we cannot ascribe to God personal attributes without limiting his nature. God traditionally conceived by the Stoics (and of course by Jews and Christians) is both unlimited and infinite and yet personal. The Stoics said god was rational being endowed with all excellence. But virtue is incompatible with this, for, virtue presuppoes imperfection overcome. For instance, to be courageous one must have been exposed to danger; to be temperate, pleasure must have been resisted. Carneades asks–how can God exhibit such virtue? How can a Being said to be omnipotent, face danger? How can a Being supposed to be passionless, resist pleasure which does not affect him? Does he then lack the virtues of fortitude and temperance? If he does, then how can he be described as all-virtuous. We cannot affirm and deny of the same subject, some attribute or other–we cannot have our cake and eat it.

He also attacks the Stoic conception of divine providence in a vein similar to that which David Hume employed in the 18th century–the argument from Design. Carneades says that the evidence for design in the world is inconclusive. He points to those features of the world which would seem to tell against its being the outcome of design on the part of a divine designer : poisonous snakes, destructive agencies on land and sea, disease and so on.

It is said that god's greatest gift to man is reason. But here arises a question : If god is providential, why has this gift been so unevenly and

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1. *Prof Thrower says : This is a point not without contemporary interest at a time when so many regard the question of the existence of God as settled negatively once an account of the origin of the belief in this proposition has been put forward usually today in psychological or sociological terms. op.cit. p. 40.*
2. *R.D. Hicks, Stoic and Epicurean, p. 330*

unfairly distributed? Is god guilty of partiality in his dealing with men? No. For Carneades, as for Hume and later for John Stuart Mill, the most reasonable conclusion would appear to be to deny the existence of God.

Euhemerus is the thinker who has given his name to that theory of the origin of gods, known as *Euhemerism*, which holds that gods are simply glorified heroes from times long passed. But this theory is not entirely original, for Hecataeus somewhat earlier had also maintained that all excellent men became gods.

Euhemerus' doctrine fell on fertile soil and it persisted for a long time. In the Roman world of the 2nd century CE, Diodorus seized, in his history, upon Euhemerism as the best scientific explanation of religion. Many others, notable among them Thomas Carlyle as late as the 19th century CE (1795 to 1881 CE), have followed this line of thought.

The Roman Period

During the period of the early Roman Empire (which covers the last century BCE and the first two centuries of the Common Era) there are also a number of thinkers/persons, who come before us as the exponents of an approach to life which is on the whole secular or humamistic. Among them there are three leading figures–Cicero, Lucretius and Pliny the Elder.

The Roman state recognised the importance of religion as a bulwork for morality–particularly so far as the masses were concerned. At a later stage it also became a test of political orthodoxy. Yet Glover says that there has hardly existed an age less interested in religion–unless of course it be our own. He was of course, referring to the educated upper classes. Their secularism and cynicism is typified in Cicero.

Cicero writes to his wife from exile : 'If however these misfortunes are permanent, then, my darling, I wish to see you as soon as possible and to die in your embrace, *since neither the gods whom you have worshipped* (...) nor men whom I have always served, *have requited us*.'[1]

Cicero had no other religion than philosophy, his consolation in adversity and his guide to the conduct of life. Philosophically he stood with the sceptically minded Academics. As a statesman, he stood by the established Roman religion, but such adherence was purely political.

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1. *Cicero, Ad Fam 14.4 Quoted : kevin Guinagh and Alfred P. Dorjahn, Latin Literature in Translation, p. 223.*

It was not his conviction, because to all intents and purposes, he was a practical atheist.

When you attend a certain ceremony at the house of your friend, you do all what others do, simply to show your solidarity with them & to avoid the odd man out situation. That is not your conviction. At that time, because there was state religion and that was the test of political orthodoxy so every statesman was of necessity required to act accordingly so far as his duty as a statesman was concerned. But so far he as an individual was concerned, he was free to think or act independently. They were reverse of the Indian politicians who pretend to be secular on the stage but in private life are religiously orthodox of the first water. These so-called secularists always mix religion wih politics for political gains.

Talking about the Roman period, Drachmann says that such an attitude (as was of Cicero's) was wide spread among the upper classes at the beginning of the Common Era, an age in which philosophy was prominent and in which religion was not so much opposed as ignored as irrelevant to the real problems of life.[1] The poet Horace was every whit a secular minded and he laughed in his *Odes* at both superstition and at any suggestion of a divine interest in men.

Among thinkers of the age, who did in fact rise to a philosophical articulation of unbelief, there are Lucretius and Pliny, the Elder.

Lucretius was a poet. His superb poem is : *On the Nature of the Universe or things*. "He is the only European writer", says Mr. Thower, "who ever put a philosophical system, as distinct from a theological one, into great poetry."[2] His poem contains complete atheism.

Lucretius' attitude is that of one who is reconciled to life by the calm contemplation of law as it reigns in the universe and by the knowledge that the gods do not exist and that all life ends in death. He held religion guilty of many misdeeds, so it ought to be abolished entirely.

It would not be out of place to mention about *The Swerv3 · How the world Because Modern*[3]–the Pulitzer Prize winning book by Stephen Greenblatt published in 2011. The author says that Lucretius is the gateway to the modern world i.e. his poem *On the Nature of*

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1. *A.B. Drachmann, op.cit., p. 116*
2. *James Thrower, op.cit., p. 45*
3. *The Swerve : How the...., Vintage Books, London.*

Things helped to a great extent in ushering in the modern period. In 1417 CE the discovery of a manuscript of Lucretius' poem 'On the Nature of Things' after centuries of neglect in the library of a German monastery was a turning point in the history of the world. The poem is a tribute by a Roman to the Greek philosopher Epicurus, an atomist and atheist. The manuscript was found by a humanist scholar, philosopher, Vatican secretary and Chancellor and historian of Florence, Poggio Bracciolini.

The Manuscript could easily have been lost as so many ancient wrings were, but Poggio came upon it, he copied it and saved it so that it could spread, as it did, throughout the humanist circles of Europe in the 15th century. To be sure, Poggio was looking for the poem because such books were burnt centuries before by the fanatics. It was by chance that Poggio found a copy of it. The poem was about chance, particularly in a crucial passage about the motion of atoms that swerve by chance to create the forms of things against the necessities that otherwise determine motion. Greenblatt says that the poem helped to bring about the modern world.

The modern world in Greenblatt's view has adopted and to some extent realized Lucretius' desire to free mankind from religious superstitions and from the heavy oppression that belief in an afterlife places upon peace and pleasures of this life. Relying on the opening of Lucretius' poem, a thrilling invocation of Life giving Venus, he states that "Lucretius saw the universe as a constant, intensely erotic hymn to Venus." Lucretius teaches, the author says, to set aside our religious fears and "embrace the world in wonder and gratitude and awe."

There is also an other book whose title is quite telltale : *Lucretius and The Modern World* by W.R. Johnson. It was published in 2000. The author, in this highly readable book, produces personal account of the main features of the Epicurean philosophy and depicts the reception and influence of Lucretius in the modern world.

Pliny the Elder was an atheist, says Drachmann in his study of *Atheism in Pagan Antiquity* and certainly it appears so in the passages from his 'History' quoted by Drachmann. His attitude to the divine is one of indifference. He writes–*"I therefore deem it a sign of human weakness to ask about the shape or form of God.* Whoever God is, if any other God (than the universe) exists at all, and in whatever part of

the world he is, he is all perception, all sight, all hearing, all soul, all reason, all self."[1]

This is Stoic pantheism carried to its logical conclusion. Glover says that Stoicism of that period, by which almost all the upper classes were influenced, was for all practical purposes, atheistic.

Pliny writes–'If the gods, as Seneca claims, lend a hand to such a climb, the climber has to make his own way by temperance and fortitude. The 'holy spirit in this us' is after all hardly to be distinguished from conscience, intellect and will. God, says Epictetus, ordains that if you wish for Good, get it for yourself.'[2] Seneca also says so–*'What do you want with prayers?' he asks, 'make yourself happy.'*[3]

Mr. Thrower says that the Stoics of this period have little that is definite to say about either polytheism or the personality of the gods. 'God', 'the gods', 'Zeus' are used interchangeably and more often than not identified with fate, nature and the universe.[4] Glover says that thus Stoicism fell between two stools : on the one had it hand not a sufficient feeling for the past to give any support to popular religion and on the other hand it had not sufficient resolution to be done with it.

The greatest representative of Stoicism after Epictetus in this period was the Emperor, Marcus Aurelius. The agnosticism and practical atheism which we have noted earlier as characterizing the Stoicism of others, was present in him in a higher degree; so much so that, says Myers, 'the peculiar mind of the solitary Emperor has made him the saint and the exemplar of Agnosticism.'

The poets of the first two centuries of the Common Era also joined the general attitude of agnosticism and cynicism towards religion.

Oenomas in the *The Swindlers Unmasked* violently attacks the oracles as a priestly fraud. Lucian was more important. In him many have seen a prefiguration of Voltaire. For him, religious belief was nothing if not ridiculous and therefore a fitting subject for his light satires, in which he ridiculed belief in the gods. His *Lover of Lies* takes the gods at their face value and reduces the situation described in the traditional religion to absurdity. Zeus, at one point, 'most amiably allows

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1. *Quoted : Drachmann, op.cit., p. 118; of pliny, Natural History, II, 1-27 SS14.*
2. *Drachmann, op.cit., p. 65*
3. *Ibid, p. 66.*
4. *James Thrower, op.cit., p. 46*

him (the poet) to stand and watch him at work, hearing prayers as they come up through tubes and granting or rejecting them, then settling some auguries, and finally arranging the weather.'[1] His *Zeus Tragoedus* and *Zeus Elenchomenus* are written in the same vein.

One thinker that we must discuss before the end of this chapter in Sextus Empiricus, who belongs to the late second and early third century. He is not only the last and the greatest of the thinkers in the Sceptical tradition, but also he is one of the main source for the knowledge of philosophy of this early period.

He is a sceptic in the Epicurean tradition seeking that freedom from mental excitement which will secure him peace of mind.

Two works from him have come down to us and their titles are significant–*The Pyrrhonic Institutes* and *Against the Dogmatists.* Commenting on them, Robert Flint says : All Greek scepticism, all that that was important in the most thorough and consistent development of agnosticism which has appeared in the world, seems to have been preserved in them.[2] Their influence on later thinkers has been considerable. The Scepticism that was revived in Europe from about the beginning of the sixteenth century drew its inspiration, its principles, its methods and its arguments largely from his writings. Montaigne and Hume in particular quoted extensively from him. So did also Sir Walter Raleigh.[3]

These are some of the glimpses of the Western atheism, scepticism and rationalism.

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1. *T.R. Glover, The Conflict of Religions in the Early Roman Empire, p. 209, cf. Lucian. 1 Caromen, 24.*
2. *Robert Flint, Agnosticism, p. 95*
3. *G.T. Buckley, Atheism in the English Renaissance, ch. XI.*

Testament of Middle Eastern Atheism

An Atheist in India is called Nastik–a Sanskrit word. In the Middle East he is called Zindiq–an Arabic word. If Nastika was challenging to the authority of the Vedas, Zindiq was challenging Quran; if Nastika was challenging Shradhha, Zindiq was challenging Haj. But there were many things that were dissimilar in both the quarters.

Indian atheism is as old as the Western–both of them started centuries before the birth of Christ, i.e. before the C.E. But Middle Eastern (ME) is not that old. We see that it was evident in the 7th century CE. Before that what was the situation, cannot be known because sources are not available.

We know from the Quran that there were Arab sceptics in Mecca who did not accept what Muhammad preached—they scoffed at the notion of the resurrection of the body, they doubted the divine origins of his revelation and even accused him of plagiarizing the pagan Arab poets. Even now certain verses of the Quran are attributed to the pre-Islamic poet, al-Qays, by some people. Robertson says that it is owing to these Meccan free-thinkers that we have so few miracles attributed to Muhammad Saheb in the early days of Islam. They disbelieved in a future life and miracles and put to Muhammad challenges that, "showed they rationally disbelieved his claim to inspiration. Hence, clearly, the scarcity of miracles in early legend, on the Arab side."

As pagan Arabs lacked any deep religious sense, so they were not used to thank superior powers for the worldly successes. They converted out of cupidity and hope of booty and success in the world. Thus many outwardly confessed their belief but in fact had no regard for Islam and its dogma and ritual. If things went wrong, they were ready to drop Islam as quickly as they had adopted. The Arabs also resisted the institution of namaz (Muslim prayers) and ridiculed the movements of the body connected with them.

The Umayyads (661-750 CE) have always been considered "godless" by their opponents. We can get a glimpse of the kind of atmosphere that the Caliph al-Walid II (ruled in 743) grew up in by

the verses that he addressed to the Quran, referring to the threats made by the Quran against the stubborn opponents (Sura 14/8, 9) : "You hurl threats against the stubborn opponent, well then, I am a stubborn opponent myself. Well you repeat before God at the day of resurrection just say : My Lord, al-Walid has torn me up."[1]

Walid II is said to have stuck the Quran onto a lance and shot it to pieces with arrows while repeating the preceding verses. He surrounded himself with poets, dancing girls and lived a merry life of the libertine with no interest in religion. The Umayyads failed to satisfy the pious who dreamed of a theocratic state.

The Abbasids overthrew the Umayyads, "because of their godlessness and opposition to religion." They were intolerant toward the practice of other religions than Islam. They said that they were God's representatives on earth–"God's shadow on earth." The pious were with them because they (Abbasids) were descended from the Prophet's uncle al-Abbas.

The Kharijites are considered the earliest of the religious sects of Islam and are important for the development of the theory of the Caliphate. They were very tolerant of non-Muslims, sometimes even recognizing them as equals to Muslims. The Kharijite showed rationalist tendencies, and in this they influenced the later rationalists–Mu'tazilites. One of their groups even impugned the reliability of the Quranic text : they held that Sura 12, Sura Joseph, did not belong to the Quran as its "contents were worldly and frivolous" (in the words of Goldziher), an erotic tale with nothing sacred about it, and hence unworthy to be the word of God.

Yazid b. Abi Anisa, a Kharijite theologian, put forward another idea–that God would reveal a new Quran to a prophet among the Persians and that he would found a new religion for them : a religion divine in the same sense as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. That clearly goes against the orthodox doctrine of Islam being the final revelation and Muhammad being the seal of the Prophets.

Thus Kharijites help the Muslims to reflect on their faith in a rational way.

The Quadarites were called so because they restricted the fixing of fate (qadar). Their opponents were called Jabriya (the people of blind compulsion–jabr)

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1. *Ignaz Goldziher, Muslim Studies, Vol. 2, p. 65*

According to Hubert Grimme, the 'earliest conscious Muslim attitude on the subject seems to have been of an uncompromising fatalism."[1] This view of man's helplessness began to be questioned towards the end of the 7th century by those pious Muslims who were influenced by the Christian theological environment.

The upholders of the doctrine of free will came to be known as the Qadarites (Qadar=fate, those who restricted it : Qadarites)

Goldziher[2] says that this movement of Qadarites is important because it was "the first step toward liberation from the dominance of traditional notions."

Mutazilites

They are important for having introduced Greek philosophical ideas into the discussion of Islamic dogmas. This, in turn, brought with it scepticism, rationalism and liberating doubt, which could only lead to opposition to current orthodoxy.[3] Goldziher says that they were "the first to expand the sources of religious cognition in Islam so as to include a valuable but previously–in such connection–rigorously avoided element : reason (aql)[4]." Some of them even said "the first, necessary condition of knowledge is doubt," and others said, "fifty doubts are better than one certainty." For them there was a sixth sense besides the usual five, namely 'aql' (reason).

They raised reason to a touchstone in matters of belief. One of their early representative, Bishar ibn al-Mu'tamir of Baghdad, wrote a vertiable eulogy of reason, as part of a didactic poem of natural history :

"How exellent is reason as a pilot and compasion in good fortune and evil, As a judge who can pass judgment over the invisible as if he saw it with his own eyes... one of its actions is that it distinguishes good and evil. Through a possessor of powers whom God has singled out with utter sanctification and purity".

No wonder that they were declared as the "freethinkers of Islam" by Heinrich Steiner of Zurich in a study devoted to the ideas of Mu'tazilites in 1865. In 1906 Robertson also speaks of them as "freethinkers".

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1. *Article "Kadar" in Encyclopaedia of Islam, first edition.*
2. *Ignaz Goldziher, Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law, p. 82*
3. *Ibn Warraq, Why I am Not A Muslim., p. 246*
4. *Ignaz Goldziher, op.cit., p. 87*

The Mu'tazilites criticized popular superstitions, especially the mythological elements of eschatology. They gave an allegorical explanation of the bridge sirat (pul sirat) that one had to cross to get to the next world. They excised the scales in which the acts of man are weighed and eliminated many other childish fantasies.

Their philosophy is usually summed up in five principles :

1. Monotheism. Here the divine attributes are recognized but are seen as being identical with the divine being rather than something added to it. Although the Quran talks of the hand and eyes, etc. of God, these anthropomorphisms are interpreted in an allegorical way. In addition, the first principle involves the denial of the Beatific Vision.

The second principle was that god is just. He is not responsible for man's evil deeds, because all human actions result from his free will.

The third principle discusses problems of belief and unbelief. Sins are divided into grave and petty classes. Belief consists in avoiding grave sins.

The fourth principle concerns the question of whether a Muslim who had committed a grave sin could still be regarded as a Muslim. Wasil, one of the traditional founders of the Mu'tazilites, replied that the grave sinner must be placed in an intermediary position between infidelity and faith.

The fifth principle involves the injuction of right and the prohibition of wrong. It is precisely in the discussions of the righteousness or justice of God that the Mu'tazilites' rationalism comes to fore : They are not explicitly regarding Reason as a source of religious truth, but they are assuming the complete validity of their human, rational ideas of justice when applied to God and the complete ability of their finite minds to apprehend the eternal Being. When they held that no evil or injustice might be ascribed to God, they were thinking of him as a superior kind of magistrate or administrator. The punishment of evildoers is certainly just, but only where the wrong is the man's own doing. *Thus ideas of sublunary justice led them to deny God's supreme control of human affairs.*[1]

Thus the doctrine of man's self-determination leads to the rejection of the notion of God's arbitrary rule–in this way the divine omnipotence is limited by the requirements of justice. Al-nazzam, one of the more

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1. *Article on Mu'tazilites, in Encyclopaedia of Islam, First edition.*

rationalist Mu'tazilites, says : reason reigns supreme in the Universe. "He attributed to his rational ideas of value such absoluteness that God himself must vow before them. God must do what is best for men; God must not assign men to paradise or hell except in accordance with just principles.[1]

Ahmed b. Habit, one of al-Nazzam's pupils, went way beyond his master's teachings practically into unbelief, as far as the orthodox were concerned. He taught metempsychosis, the divine nature of the Messiah, criticize the prophet Muhammad for his many wives, and found others more virtuous than Muhammad.[2]

The Mu'tazilite insistence on freewill leads them to their humanist belief that man's ultimate destiny depends on himself. They further limited the the arbitrary power of God by their 'law of compensation', whereby those (including animals) who have unjustly suffered on earth must be compensated in the next world. Goldziher says, the Mu'tazillites, in the end, "set a free man over against a relatively unfree God."[3]

What is good and what is bad (evil)? The orthodox had replied : Good is that what God commands and evil is that what he forbids. But the Mu'tazilites believed in the autonomy of ethics and held the view that there "is absolute good and absolute evil, and reason is the instrument for ethical value judgments. Reason is the primus, not the divine will. A thing is good not because God has commanded it, but God has commanded it because it is good." This is tantamount to saying that God is bound by the Categorical Imperative. i.e. he is under an unconditional moral obligation which is binding in all circumstances and is not dependent on his inclination or purpose.

Ibn Warraq says : Other aspects of their rationalism may be seen in the way the Mu'tazilites looked critically at the Koran.

Devoutness and the inability to silence the inner voice of reason made many of them doubt the authenticity of certain verses where the prophet utters curses against his enemies such as Abu Lahab. They also believed and this was but a logical outcome of their denying eternal qualities to God, that the Koran was created and not eternal, while the traditionalists clung to its uncreatedness and eternity. How, asked the Mu'talzilites, could the words that God has used to address Moses have

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1. *W. Montgomery Watt, Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam, p. 73*
2. *Ibn Warraq, op. cit., p. 247*
3. *R.A. Goldziher, Intruduction to Islamic Theology and Law, p. 91*

been eternal and uncreated when Moses was but a creature of time? For the orthodox, the Mu'tazilite view spelled disaster.[1]

Their critical rationalism led the Mu'tazilites to doubt the inimitability of the literary style of the Koran. They asserted : "that there is nothing miraculous in that book (the Koran) in respect to style or composition.... and that had God left men to their natural liberty, and not restrained them in that particular, the Arabians could have composed something not only equal, but superior to the Koran in eloquence, method, and purity of language."[2]

They also questioned the authenticity of the hadith, where so many of the popular beliefs were to be found. They fiercely battled against all forms of anthropomorphism.

Ibn warraq rightly observes that "had the place they had given to reason in their theology been respected by subsequent theologians, then surely Islam would have developed in a different and more salutary direction."[3]

The modern scholars Krans and Gabrieli say that the "European Englightenment" style of rationalism of the great Ibn al-Rawandi was but "the development taken to their logical conclusion of certain Mu'tazilite positions (e.g. on the miracles of the Prophet and the related tradition) and above all the place they had made for reason and rationality in their theology and theodicy."[4]

Zindiqs and Zandaqa

The term 'zindiq' was first applied in Islam to those who secretly held daulist docrtines derived from Iranian religions, such as Manichaeism,[5] while publicly professing Islam. Thus a zindiq was a heretic, guilty of zandaqa (heresy). Finally, the term zindiq came to be applied to all kinds of freethinkers, atheists and materialists. Goldziher sums up the different elements that make up what we call the zindiqs : Firstly there are the old Persian families incorporated in Islam who following the same path as the Shu'ubites, have a national interest in the revival of

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1. *Ibn Warraq, op.cit, pp. 247-48*
2. *Koran translated by Sale, p. 53*
3. *Ibn Warraq, op.cit., p. 249*
4. *F. Gabrieli, op.cit, p. 34*
5. *For Manichaeism see Appendix to this chapter*

Persian religious ideas and traditions, and from this point of view react against the Arabian character of the Muhammadan system. Then, on the other hand, there are freethinkers, who oppose in particular the stubborn dogma of Islam, reject positive religion and acknowledge only the moral law. Amongst the latter there is developed a monkish asceticism extraneous to Islam and ultimately tracable to *Buddhistic influences*.[1]

Djad Ibn Dirham was the first person who was charged of heresy and was executed on the orders of the Umayyad Caliph Hisham in 742/743. There is no indication that Djad was a dualist; rather was put to death for holding views that were later associated with the Mu'tazilites–of the createdness of the Quran and of free will. He is also said to have denied the divine attributes and so held that "God did not speak to Moses, nor take Abraham as his friend." He is said to have been a materialist, and his followers are said to have accused the Prophet of lying and to have denied the resurrection.

Serious persecutions of the Zindiqs began under the Abbasid Caliph al-Mansur (ruled from 754 to 775). Many zindiqs were put to death during his rule, the most famous being *Ibn al-Muqaffa* who was executed in 760 CE.

It is said that al-Muqaffa was asked by the Caliph Mansur to draw up an amnesty for Mansur's uncle, but the Caliph did not like the language used by al-Muqaffa in the finished document. For that reason, it is generally held, Mansur had Ibn al-Muqaffa executed 'in a most horrific manner–his limbs were cut off one by one and fed into a blazing fire.'

But it is also very probable that his unorthodox religious view played an important role in his condemnation. Gabrielli, Krans and others *have shown that an anti-Muslim work of a pronounced rationalist tendency was attributed to him.* According to Krans, he was the intellectual heir to the Rationalist tradition that flourished at the time of the Sassanid king Chosroes Anusharwan, who is said to have fostered a 'veritable hellenistic Aufklarung' (Englightenment). Anyhow Ibn al-Muqaffa attacked Islam, its prophet, its theology and theodicy and its concept of God from the perspective of the Manichaen faith.

There arises a question : how can one reconcile Ibn al-Muqaffa's rational scepticism and his adherence to Manichaean dualism?

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1. *Quoted in R.A. Nicholson, Literary History of the Arabs, pp. 372-73*

Gabrieli[1] says that intellectuals like Ibn al-Muqaffa had already given an allegorical interpretation to the Manichaen mythology and interpreted the universe and man's place in it in Gnostic terms–rational and hellenistic.

It may be noted here that Ibn al-Muqaffa is also renowned for his translations from Pehlevi into Arabic. His translation of the Book of Kalila (karataka) and Dimna (Dam naka) is a translation of the famous Sanskrit book Panchatrantra.

The Grand Inquisitor

Under Mansur's successors, al-Mahdi (775-785) and al-Hadi (785 to 786), repression, persecution and executions were applied with greater ferocity. Special magistrates were appointed to pursue the heretics and the whole Inquisition was masterminded by the Grand Inquisitor, called the Sahih al-Zanadiqa. It was enough for a single rumor to be aired for the inquisitor to take immediate steps to incriminate the suspect. Often the zindiqs were arrested in mass, imprisoned, and finally brought before the Inquisitor or the ruler, who then questioned them regarding their beliefs. If the suspects abjured their herctical religion/beliefs, they were released; if they refused to do, they were beheaded and their heads were displayed on a gibbet. Some were crucified. Al-Hadi seems to have had some strangled also. *Their heretical books were cut up with knives.*

There is a glimpse of the whole procedure from the comic anecdote about Abu Nuwas, the great poet (762, d. ca. 806-14) whose twin passions were beautiful boys and wine.

One day he entered a mosque drunk as ever. When the imam recited verse 1 from sura 109 : 'say : o you unbelievers...'; Abu Nuwas cried out, 'Here I am!' The faithful whisked him off to the chief of police declaring that he was an infidel on his own admission. The chief of police, then took him to the inquisitor. But the latter refused to believe that the poet was a zindiq and refused to proceed any further. But the crowd insisted. To calm them, he brought a portrait of the prophet of the dualists, Mani, and asked Nuwas to spit on it. He did even better than that–he pushed a finger down his throat and vomited on the picture, whereupon the inquisitor set him free and crowd dispersed.

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1. *F. Gabrieli, La zandaqa An ler siecle Abbaside in C. Cahen, et. al., L 'Elaboration de L 'Islam, pp. 23-38*

Heresy seems to have penetrated even the Hashimite family, the family to which the Prophet had belonged. Several members of the family were executed or died in prison.[1]

Ibn-L-Awja believed that light had created good, while darkness had created evil. He also taught metempsychosis and the freedom of the will. Before his death (he was executed in 772) *he confessed that he had fabricated more them 4000 traditions (hadith), in which he forbade Muslims what was in fact permitted, and vice versa.* He made Muslims break the fast when they should have been fasting, and vice versa. He raised the problem of human suffering–'why are there catastrophes, epidemics, if God is Good?' According to al-Biruni, it was the habit of Ibn Abi L-Awja to shake the faith of simple people with his questions about divine justice. From his discussion with the imam, Jafar al-Sadiq, we come to know that he believed in the eternity of the world and denied the existence of a creator.

One day he asked Jafar to justify the institution of pilgrimage and refused to accept the answer that it was ordered by God, since this reply merely pushed the question farther back to someone who was not present.

He also cast doubt on the justice of some of the punishments described in the Koran. He also accuses some of the prophets mentioned in the Koran of lying, especially Abraham and Joseph. Like so many other zindiqs, he also doubts the official dogma of the inimitability of the Koran.

He was taken prisoner and put to death in 772.[2]

One of the poets who was charged with zandaqa, beaten and finally thrown in a swamp, was Bashshar Ibn Burd. He belonged to a noble Persian family, so he had strong national sentiments. *He was born blind. He excelled as a writer of panegyric, elegy and satire.*

According to Vadja, he belonged to the shiite sect and disliked the entire Muslim community. His charge of zandaqa stemmed from an allegation that he did not pray in an orthodox manner. He is said to have mocked the call to prayer by parodying it when drunk. He is also accused of being disrespectful toward the institution of pilgrimage. On

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1. *Georges Vadja, "Les Zindiqs en pays d'Islam au debut de la periode Abbaside" in RSO XII (1938), p. 184*
2. *Ibid, pp. 173-229.*

one occasion, to deflect any suspicion that he was a zindiq, he left for the pilgrimage, but stopped at Zorara, where he spent his time drinking. When other pilgrims were returning, he joined them and pretended on his arrival home to have completed the entire pilgrimage.

One of the charges against him was that like other zindiqs he did not believe in the miraculous nature of the Koran, which the orthodox considered inimitable. They believed that no one was capable of reaching the perfection of the Koran. But the zindiqs were irreverent.

Goldziher writes : It is reported that at Basra a group of free thinkers, Muslim and non-Muslim heretics, used to congregate and that Bashshar b. Burd did not forego characterising the poems submitted to this assembly in these words : 'Your poem is better than 'this' or the other verse of the Koran; this line is better than some other verse of the Koran, etc.' Bashshar did in fact praise one of his own poetic products when he heard it recited by a singing girl in Baghdad as being better than the surat al-Hashr. The way of expression of the Koran was criticised and the similes found wanting. Al-Mubarrad tells of a heretic who ridiculed the parable in sura XXX VII/63 where the fruits of the tree Zakkum in hell are likened to the heads of devils. The critics say : *'He compares the visible with the unknown here. We have never seen the heads of devils; what kind of a simile is this*[1]*?'*

Bashshar seems to have denied resurrection and the last judgment in some of his verses. He may have believed in the transmigration of souls. In some verses he defends Iblis the devil being made of fire, for refusing to prostrate himself before Adam, being made of ordinary clay. In another verse, he prayed to the prophet Muhammad to join with him in an attack upon the Deity (God). He also seems to have held Manichaean beliefs laced with Zoroastrianism. Blachere adds, 'along with these beliefs there would seem always to have been a profound scepticism mingled with a fatalistic outlook leading Bashshar to pessimism and hedonism."[2] Out of prudence he was obliged to pay lip service to orthodoxy.

Salih B. Abd Al-Quddus was also accused of Manichaeism and was executed in 783. His extant poetry is irreproachable, containing nothing heretical. Nicholson says that being of a speculative turn of

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1. *Ignaz Goldziher, Muslim Studies, Vol. 2, pp. 363-64*
2. *Article on Bashshar b. Burd in Encyclopaedia of Islam, New edition.*

mind, he probably fell viction to the Muslim prejudice that connects "the philosophic mind" with positive unbelief.[1]

Hammad Ajrad was also executed. He belonged to a circle of free thinkers of Basra. Their meetings were attended by such unorthodox poets as Bashshar, Salih B. Abd al Quddus, Ibn Sinan of Harran, Ibn Nazir, et al. Hammad was accused of not praying in an orthodox way and of preferring some of his verses to those of the Quran. He was accused of the dualist heresy and of composing such verses as the zindiqs recited in their prayers. He was a sympathizer of the Manichaeans to the extent that his religious poetry found its way into their liturgy. He was put to death by the governor of Basra.

Aban B. Abd Al-Humayd B. Lahiq Al-Raqqasi was another freethinker of Basra. He figures in a satire by Abu Nuwas–partly as a Manichaean dulist; but also as a Rationalist :

I sat one day with Aban (plague on him!), when the time for the first prayer came, and the call was duly uttered by a correct and clear-voiced speaker. We all repeated the call to prayer to the end. Then said Aban : "How could you testify to that (i.e. the Muslim formula of faith) without ocular demonstration? So long as I live, I shall never attest anything but what I see with my eyes."

Then I said : 'Glory to God.'; he said : 'Glory to Manes'. Then I said– 'Jesus was an Apostle', he said, "Of Satan". I continued : "Moses was the interlocutor of the Gracious and Faithful One;" he said : "Then your God must have a tongue and an eye. And did he create himself, or who created him?" So, I held my tongue before this obstinate blaspheme.[2]

What were his real religious views, we do not know because Abu Nuwas' satire cannot be taken at face value. Aban rendered service to posterity by his versification of many Persian and Hindu works.

Other Freethinkers of Basra

There are many names of freethinkers available in the books, but details about their views or works are not found : there was Qays b. Zubayr who was an atheist; then there was al-Baqili who denied the resurrection; there was Ibrahim b. Sayyaba who was a zindiq and claimed

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1. *R.A. Nicholson, Literary History of the Arabs, p. 374*
2. *Quoted by D.S. Margoliouth, "Atheism (Muhammadan)" in Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics.*

that pederasty was the first law of zandaqa and so on. (Homosecceuality was crime in the past but now gay marriages are taking place. India has also decriminalized section 377 of IPC on september 6, 2018. There is no natural law in this regard. All are man-made rules, so they are not uniform at all places and in all periods. On september 5, 2018 what was a crime, on september 6, 2018 became decrimalized normal practice!)

There was Muti b. Iyas, who gives every sign of being a zindiq. But the details we have of his life, point rather to someone with a sceptical turn of mind with no real profound interest in any religion. Many stories are told of the life which he led in the company of Zindiqs or freethinkers. His songs of love and wine are distinguished by their lightness and elegance.

About Abu 'L Atahiya it is said that fearing arrest by the Grand Inquisitor, he passed himself off as a seller of cupping glasses and disappeared in the crowd of the city. What were the reasons or basis of his fear is not known. Nonetheless, he was often accused of zandaqa by his contemporaries. There is nothing in his poetry that could offend orthodox Muslims. However, Goldziher does profess to see a *reference to the Buddha in the* following two lines :

If thou wouldst see the noblest of mankind,
Behold a monarch in a beggar's garb.

(We know, the Buddha was a son of a king and he put the beggar's garb. Goldziher's assertion is based on this fact.)

Abu 'L Atahiya seems to believe "in one god who formed the universe out of two opposite elements which he created from nothing; and held, further, that everything would be reduced to these some elements before the final destruction of all phenomena. Knowledge, he thought, was acquired naturally (i.e. without divine revelation) by means of reflection, deduction and research."[1]

These views may not be heretical, but Nicholson thinks that he may have fallen out of favour for being too philosophical rather than religious views in his poetry. Therefore he concludes "this was enough to convict him of infidelity and atheism in the eyes of devout theologians who looked askance on moral teaching, however pure, that was not cast in the dogmatic mould."[2]

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1. *Quted in Ibn Warraq, op.cit., 256*
2. *Nicholson, op.cit., p. 298*

Atahiya was also accused of claiming that some of his verses were superior to those of the Koran.[1]

Abu Isa Muhammad B. Harun Warrak or Al-warraq was accused of zandaqa. He is important for, among other reasons, being the teacher of the Great Infidel himself–Al-Rawandi. No literary work of Warraq has survived and we have only his quotations quoted by Arab scholars.

He started as a Mu'tazilite theologian but seems to have been excommunicated for holding heterodoxic opinions. He wrote a history of religions wherein his objectivity, rationalism and scepticism were given free hand. His critical examination of the three branches of Christianity of his time reveals his dispassionate tone and rationalism, where there is no question of a dependence on revelation. He may well have had shitte sympathies, but it is uncertain if he was a Manichaen. He seems to have believed in the two principles and very certainly in the eternity of the world. Massignon says that he was an independent thinker and sceptic, rather than someone who believed in any fixed system of thought.

A victim of the Abbasid persecution, Al-Warraq died in exile in 909 in Ahwaz.

Abu Tammam (d. 846) was born near Damascusns in 796 or 804, and is famous as a poet. He met with much success at the court of the caliph al-Mutasim. Margoliouth says that various anecdotes are told of his visits to his provincial patrons : when staying with Ibn Radja in Fars, he gane his patron reason to suspect that he neglected the Muslim religious observances, and when questioned on this matter, expressed doubts as to the effectiveness of those observances, a confession which nearly led to his execution.[2]

But in his poetical works we do not find none of his religious doubts.

Al-Mutanabbi (915-965) is considered by many as the greatest poet in the Arabic language. Born in Kufa and educated in Damascus, al-Mutanabbi modeled himself on the poetry of Abu Tammam and consciously set out to make a name for himself. According to Blachere, he was influenced in his religious and philosophical development by Abu 'L Fadl of Kufa who was a 'complete agnostic', and an early patron of

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1. *Ibn Warraq, op.cit., p. 257*
2. *D.S. Margoliouth "Atheism (Muhammadan)" in Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics.*

his works. Under his influence, al-Mutanabbi 'cast off religious dogmas which he regarded as spiritual instructions of oppression. He then adopted a stoic and pessimistic philosophy.... The world is made up of seductions which death destroys; stupidity and evil alone triumph there.'[1]

Not achieving the fame he dreamed of, al-Mutanabbi now determined to dominate by violent means. He began revolutionary propaganda; and led a rebellion of a politico-religious nature, in which he claimed to be a prophet with a new Quran–hence his name Mutanabbi which means 'one who claims to be a prophet'. He was defeated, captured and imprisoned for two years in Hims. But his life was spared. That was an exception since to claim to be a prophet is extreme heresy and, equally, to claim to have a new Quran is against all orthodox belief. His was a fit case of death penality.

After his release he found new patronage. For nine years he sang the praises of his patron. But it seems, he had a quarrel with his patron and was obliged to slip away from Aleppo to Egypt where he found another patron. After a quarrel with him, he was again obliged to flee. He was eventally killed by bandits when he was returning to Baghdad.

Al-Mutannabbi wrote a vast number of odes. Some of them are full of bombast and some are sublime; but underneath them all we can discern a scepticism, a certain disillusionment with a world kept in chains by ignorance, stupidity and superstition, from which only death can liberate us. But, as Margoliouth[2] points out, for many Muslims, al-Mutanabbi's odes are 'defaced by utterances which imply disrepect for the prophets and revealed religion." His most offensive line for Muslims is one "in which he tells his patron, an Alid, 'the greatest miracle of the man of Tihamah (i.e. Mohammad, the Prophet) is that he is thy father'; in another he tells a patron that if his sword had hit the head of Lazarus on the battle field, Jesus would not have been able to restore him to life; and that if the Red Sea had been like his hand, Moses could never has crossed it."

Abu Hayyan Al-Tauhidi (d. ca. 1023) was one of the three zandaqas or zindiqs of Islam–others being Al-Rawanti and al-Ma'ari. According to Margoliouth, al-Tauhidi's works were considered more dangerous than those of others, because, whereas the others proclaimed their unbelief,he

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1. *Article on al-Mutanabbi in Encyclopaedia of Islam, first edition.*
2. *D.S. Margoliouth, op.cit.*

expressed his in innuendoes. Yet, his extant works do not seem heretical. In his 'Kitab al-Itma', "we find a pessimism reminiscent of al-Mutanabbi, but nothing overtly unorthodox. It is possible that his interest in and knowledge of Greek philosophy and science rendered him suspect because any such interest in those days was supposed to lead to atheism."

Al-Rawandi (born ca 820-830) started as a Mu'tazilite but was expelled from their community for heresy. Then he began ferocious attacks on the Mu'tazilites and owing to a refutation of his work by al-Khayyat, al-Rawandi's book against his former colleagues is known in part–the book is known as *Fadihat al-Mu'tazila* (the ignominy of the Mu'tazilites)

He never hesitated in broaching such subjects as were long considered both taboo and dangerous. It is, therefore, not surprising that he was branded an infidel and a zindiq. He was publicly accused by the Mu'tazilites, and eventually, because of government persecution, he had to leave Baghdad.

In his attacks on his former friends, al-Rawandi showed up their inconsistencies and even deduced heretical conclusions from their principles.

As Nyberg[1] has shown, al-Rawandi was condemned and expelled by the Mu'tazilites for his Aristotelian tendencies that destroyed the central orthodox dogma of the creation *ex nihilo* and of the creator. We know that al-Rawandi wrote a book on the eternity of the world, which could not survive.

It was often philosophers and doctors who took him seriously, and some even came to his defense. Al-Haitham, for example, showed that the putative refutations of al-Rawandi were totally wrong.

Al-Rawandi taught dualism in one of his books, for a time, turned toward a shiism of a moderate kind, but finally he cut all intellectual links with the Muslim community and ended his life as an Atheist.

The Mu'tazilites accused him of attacking the prophet, the Quran, the hadith, revelation in general in such works as the *Kitab al-Damigh*, *Kitab al-Farid* and *Kitab al-Zumurrudh*. But as Nyberg and others have shown, al-Rawandi was only drawing the logical conclusion of

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1. *H.S. Nyberg, Deux Reprouves : Amr Ibn Ubaid et Ibn Ar Rawandi dans classicisme et Declin culturel, pp. 131-35.*

the principles held by the Mu 'tazilites themselves : The unbelief of ibn al-Rawandi could, in effect, be seen as the inexorable consequence of the effort made by Mu'tazilites to accomodate human reason in the acceptance of revelation... (in doing so) they had placed their trust in a demanding guide that is not always easy to discard half way.[1]

The extracts that we possess of al-Rawandi's *Kitab al-Zumurrudh*, show exactly why he was seen as a radical and dangerous heretic. They contain a trenchant criticism of prophecy in general, and of the prophecy of Muhammad in particular. *He maintains that reason is superior to revelation.* Either what the so-called prophets say is in accordance with reason, in which case prophets are otiose and not needed, since ordinary human beings are equally endowed with reason, or it does not conform to reason, in which case it must be rejected.[2] For al-Rawandi all religious dogmas are contrary to reason and therefore are to be rejected; "the miracles attributed to the prophets, persons who may reasonably be compared to sorcerers and magicians, are pure invention" (a thesis that reminds one of Morton White's, that Jesus was a magician). As for the Koran, far from being a miracle and inimitable, it is an inferior work from the literary point of view according to them, since, as they say, it is neither clear nor comprehensible nor of any practical value and it is certainly not a revealed book. Besides its putative literary miraculousness "is hardly relevent, as probative evidence, in regard to foreigners to whon Arabic is an alien tongue."[3]

Al-Rawandi attacks all religious ritual as futile, and says that any knowledge acquired by the so-called prophets can be explained in natural and human terms without having to attribute its origin to revelation. According to one authority, al-Rawandi rejected the very possibility of "of a satisfactory rational answer to the question of God's existence and the rationality of his ways." His other views seen to include the eternity of the world, the superiority of dualism over monotheism, and the vanity of divine wisdom.

Al-Qa'assi, in his *Risalatu'l Ghufran*, attributes the following lines to al-Rawandi : He addressed to God : "Thou didst apportion the means

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1. *F. Gabrieli, La Zandaqa Auier Siecle Abbaside in C. Cahen et al., L 'Elaboration de L 'Islam, p. 34.*
2. *Ibn Warraq, op.cit., pp. 259-60*
3. *Article. Ibn al-Rawandi in Encylopaedia of Islam, new edition, Quoted : Ibn Warraq; op.cit., p. 260*

of livelihood to Thy creatures like a drunkard who shows himself churlish. Had a man made such a division, we should have said to him, you have swindled. Let this teach you a lesson." Commenting on this, al-Ma'arri exlaimed in horror, "If these two couplets stood erect, they would be taller in sin than the Egyptian pyramids in size."[1]

These are some glimpses of atheism, rationalism and those of sceptics, freethinkers that existed in the Muslim world in the past.

Most of these people had no alternate philosophy it seems. To say that my verse is better than that verse of Quran, is no philosophy at all. It is sheer self-recommendation which is no recommendation; it is meaningless, because every potter praises his own pottery. If others say that your verses are better than that, only then it carries a meaning.

Similarly, to disrespect a book by tearing, does not mean that you have refuted the principles enunciated in it. You may disagree with any principle, but tearing the book is no way of disagreement. That is madness. Atheism/Free Thought/Rationalism means present your views in a civilized manner and refute other's views with logic. These so-called atheists fail to challenge any principle of the Quran squarely. Mostly they were frivolous people working under jealousy without any clear cut rational alternate ideology. I fail to understand what their ideology was and how that was an alternative to the one being refuted by them. It seems, all these people were polytheists and were expressing their anguish impotently.

They seem to have not read the Quran. Compare them with Indian atheists who had read the Vedas and other books and they raised specific questions with reference to those books. They presented the arguments and those are referred to in the books of almost every school of thought. That is why they are considered the forefathers of Indian philosophy. The majority of the Middle Eastern atheists stand no where, I am afraid.

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1. *Quoted by R.A. Nicholson, in 'The Risalatual Ghufran' in JRAS 1900; 1902.*

Appendix 1

Manichaeism

Manes or Mani, the founder of Manichaeism religon was born in Southern Babylonia in about 216 CE. It is said that he was of Persian descent and related to the royal house of Parthia.

Mani began teaching in about 240 CE; but was *forced to leave for India by the opposition of the Zoroastrain priests.* After two years he returned and again began to preach. He was welcomed by Shapur I, for whom Mani wrote a book. The royal patronage lasted for 30 years; but eventually the Zoroastrian priests had him impeached and condemned. He was put to death by being flayed alive.

His religion i.e. Manichaeism was a dualism which rejected any possibility of tracing the origins of good and evil to one and the same source. There existed a primeval battle between God and matter, light and darkness, truth and error. The world is a mixture of these opposites–man too is a mixture of the two. The purpose of religion was to separate the two and render evil harmless.

For this purpose, severe asceticism and vegetarianism are needed. *Manichaeism spread rapidly and for a time became a serious rival of Christianity.*

As it believed in two forces–one that of Good and the other that of Evil, so it was dualism; whereas monotheism of Islam maintains only one God–only one force. So dualism became an offence under Islamic system.

Appendix 2

The Abbasid Caliph al-Ma'mum took the Mu'tazilite cause and proclaimed the thesis of the creation of the Koran official state dogma throughout the empire. He who refused to assent to the createdness of the Koran was put in prision. Mihna (Muslim Inquisition) was created for this purpose.

Al-Ma'mun's son al-Wathik continued the policy of his father. He personally tried to behead one theologian who refused to follow the official doctrine. Several prominent men died in prison, many were tortured and harrassed. Under al-Mutawakkil, 'who reigned from 847 to 861, Mihna was stopped, and the caliph even forbade the profession of the creation of the Quran on pain of death. Under al-Mutawakkil, the persecuted became the persecutors. Many of the Mu'tazilites were ready to assassinate those who rejected their doctrines and advocated the jihad in all regions in which their dogma did not have the ascendancy. It seems the support of the state turned their head, made them irrationals and fanatics. It was al-Ashari (d. 935) who gave the death blow to *Mu'tazilism, which was, in the words of Wensinck, 'infected by its essence'; i.e. Rationalism.* The Asharite school "followed in several particulars the Mu'tazilite road." For example, this school believed that knowledge supported only by traditional sources was uncertain, only rational proof gave certain knowledge. The Asharites fell between two schools they were despised by the Mu'tazilites and philosophers on one hand and the traditionalists on the other. The traditionalist view ultimately prevailed in Islam and it consisted in refusing to bend to reason and in opposing to intellectual freedom. From the middle of the tenth century it has been maintaining its petrifying influence almost intact down to the present time.

The Vedas and the Kautsas

I

Kautsa is the first atheist in the ancient records who challenged the authority of the Vedas. Yaska, the author of Nirukta (C. 800 BC E), has recorded the views of Kautsa to refute them.

Kautsa declares अनर्थका हि मन्त्राः i.e. the mantras are meaningless, so devoid of any knowledge. He says that as the mantras are meaningless so to write Nirukta is also useless. When the mantras are meaningless, what is the use of a book which tries to show etymologies of the words of the Vedas–as that book will contain etymologies of meaningless words!

Kautsa says : नियतवाचोयुक्तयो नियतानुपूर्व्या भवन्ति (ch. 1), i.e. these mantras are meaningless as in them place of every word is fixed and also their sequence in the sentence is fixed.

If a mantra runs thus : अग्न आ याहि वीतये, we will have to recite it only in this form. We can not say–वीतये अग्न आ याहि or अग्ने वीतये आ याहि. In our day-to-day life, we can say विद्यालयं अहं गच्छामि or अहं विद्यालयं गच्छामि or अहं गच्छामि विद्यालयम् (I go to school). In a meaningful sentence we can change the place of words without damaging the meaning thereof. But in the mantras change of place of words is not possible. So, they are meaningless.

Secondly, in a meaningful sentence, we can use words of our choice. We can say पाठशाला in place of विद्यालय or vice versa. But in the mantras the use of synonyms is prohibited. You cannot say Pavaka (पावक) in place of Agni. This also shows that the mantras are meaningless.

Secondly, अथापि ब्राह्मणेन रूपसम्पन्ना विधीयन्ते, the mantras are used according to the Brahmanas, the books known by that name. Though, they have their 'gender'/form/personality, they are used as per the Brahmanas irrespective of their personality.If they were meaningful, they could not be used like this. 'उरु प्रथस्वोरु ते यज्ञपतिः प्रथताम्' here in the mantra verb प्रथताम् is there, even then the Brahmana declares : 'इति

प्रथयति' i.e. verb of the mantra is not taken into consideration, only the declaration of the Brahmana-grantha dominates. So it is clear the verb in the mantra is meaningless, as all the other words of the mantra are.

Thirdly, अथाप्यनुपपन्नार्था भवन्ति, i.e. the mantras state absurd things. There are mantras that say–ओषधे त्रायस्वैनम्. Here a plant is requested to protect. How can a plant or a tree save? An absurd statement.

See an other mantra : 'स्वधिते मैनं हिंसीः' इत्याह हिंसनू, when an animal is attacked with a sword, this mantra is uttered : it means : o sword, protect this animal. When you are killing with a sword, you request the sword to protect it. Is there any sense in this? Such absurd mantra cannot be meaningful.

Fourthly, the mantras are विप्रतिषिद्धार्था भवन्ति. i.e. they state contradictory things. One mantra says एक एव रुद्रोऽवतस्थे न द्वितीयः, असंख्याताः सहस्राणि ये रुद्राः अधिभूम्याम् (यजुर्वेद 4 16/54) i.e. There is only one Rudra, not the second, there are innumerable thousand Rudras on this earth.

What is this? What the first half of the sentence says is contradicted by the second half of the sentence. Take an other verse. It says–अशत्रुरिन्द्र जज्ञिषे (ऋ. 8-7-21-2) i.e. there is no enemy of Indra–he took birth as an enemyless. But in the same Rigveda an other mantra says : शतं सेना अजयत् साकमिंद्रः (ऋ. 8-5-22-1) i.e. Indra defeated 100 armies at a strech. In other words, he defeated 100 enemies, i.e. he had 100 enemies.

All these mantras are contradictory. What is said by one mantra, is contradicted by the other, if not by the 2nd part of the same sentence. That being so, there remains no meaning intact. So, they are meaningless.

Fifth reason, according to Kautsa, of the meaninglessness of the mantras is–अथापि जानन्तं सम्प्रेष्यति i.e. they (mantras) instruct what he already knows. अग्नये समिध्यमानाय होतारमनुब्रूहीति (श.ब्रा. 1-3-2-3) i.e. when the fire is aflame utter mantras : when fire is aflame utter mantras and offer oblation. What is said in this instruction is redundant as no sacrificer or priest is ignorant of such a step as is being instructed here.

There is sixth reason. One mantra says : अदितिर्द्यौरदितिरन्तरिक्षम्. i.e. Aditi is heaven, Aditi is sky. How can Aditi mother, and father and son? It is all nonsense. It is all meaningless.

Then the mantras are obscure–अथापि अविस्पष्टार्था भवन्ति i.e. they are obscure. There are words like these–अम्यग्, यादृश्मिन्, जारयायि, काणुका इति. This obscurantism makes the mantra meaningless.

On the basis of these seven reasons Kautsa declared the Vedas devoid of meaning. This is the first recorded opposition to the Vedas and the opponents are atheists of that age who were Brahmanas and well-versed in the Vedic lore. That is why they attack the Vedas on the basis of internal evidence. They do not abuse, they do no quarrel; but they produce verse and chapter of them and logically put their case. All this happened centuries before the Buddha, as the time of Yaska is said to be 800 BCE which can go more back.

It seems that these people were seekers after truth and took the risk of being starved. The Brahmanas had no other means of livelihood than performing Yajna for others. The atheist Brahmanas, when they were attacking the Vedas, were forfeiting their right to perform Yajna for others. Who will employ such a person as priest or would they themselves be ready to do the job when they have no belief in all that? To me it seems a matter of life and death. They could enjoy life as priests, but their philosophy was going against the basis of that priesthood. So, they had no option but to take the risk which, it seems, they took. Then there was starvation[1], torture and odium for them. They perished instead of becoming priests or leading the gullible people up the garden path.

II

From the Nyayamanjari of Jayanta Bhatta (850-910 CE) we know many things about the Vedas and atheists/rationalists.

Is sabda a source of valid knolwedge?

If it is established that sabda is a source of valid knowledge then

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1. (a) *ते न गुरो भोजनीयाः (निरुक्त, Ch. 2)*
   (the guru should not allow them to eat.)
   (b) *गुरुणा ते न पालनीयाः (सायण in his ऋग्वेदभाष्य-भूमिका)*
   (the guru should not raise them by providing meals etc.)
   (c) *स साधुभिर्बहिष्कार्यः (मनु. 2/11)*
   (Good people should boycott him)
   (d) *स शूद्रवद् बहिष्कार्यः सर्वस्माद् द्विजकर्मणः (मनु. 2/103)*
   (he must be thrown away like a shudra from all the activities done by the upper castes).

we should discuss either sabda is a distinct proof or it is included in one of the recognized proofs.

A proof is that which produces true knowledge. But words, being a product of imagination, do not produce the true knowledge of the real objects. The meaning of the word may be, somehow, made out but it can be identified neither with a universal, nor with a particular, nor with a concrete universal. There is no eternal relation of denotation holding between a word and an object. If it exists at all then how can such a relation as obtaining between a word and a transcendental object be comprehended? The meaning of a Vedic sentence in the subjunctive mood (लिङ्) cannot be grasped. It is held that the mental activity which causes the action, denoted by the given verb to be done, and the command denoted by the injunction stand to each other, as a noun relates itself with its adjective, by means of the relation of identity or some other relation. We cannot follow that either words or their meanings or sentences which are held to communicate the interrelated meanings of words or the subtle power of a word which is supposed to reveal its meaning cannot produce the knowledge of a real object.

It is not reasonable to hold that when the knowledge of an object is produced by a sentence the validity of it is assured if the sentence is known as being uttered by a reliable person or as being eternal.

Even if it is admitted that the words are eternal then it is to be established that either the Vedic sentences are composed by an author or they are eternal. If it is held that they are composed by an author it is impossible to find out the author.

Even if it is assumed that they are composed by a single author then it is difficult to comprehend that he has no enemy and is one, omniscient and compassionate.

There are many āgamas (scriptures) which involve contradictions. Now it is difficult for us to ascertain that which books of them have been composed by God and which ones have not been composed by Him : परस्परविरुद्धाश्च संति भूयांस आगमाः, केषां कस्येश्वरः कर्त्ता कस्य नेति न मन्महे. (तृतीयमाह्निकम्).

There are many defects which are noticed in the Vedas which are assumed to be the work of God. They are as follows viz. (1) contradiction, (2) repetition of the same idea, (3) non-obtainment of the result assured

by the Vedas and (4) the arising of the contary result : वेदे दोषाश्च विद्यन्ते व्याघातः पुनरुक्तता, फलस्यानुपलम्भश्च तथा फलविपर्ययः. (तृतीयमाह्निकम्).

If god were the author of the Vedas then the Artha-vada section of the Vedas (the section which contains recommendation, praise, condemnation, a reference to history etc.) would not have involved material contradiction, mutual contradictions and references of ephemeral objects.

The Vedas inform us of the eternal objects and instruct us to do some action by which some results are accomplished. Now, a doubt arises in our mind viz., do the Vedas initiate us into eternal objects or do they teach us to do some actions or do they intend to do the both? In short, the authority of the Vedas cannot be rationally established. You may admit the authority of the Vedas because either they furnish you with the means to your livelihood or they command your unconditional reverence. तेन वेदप्रमाणत्वं विषमे पथि वर्त्तते, जीविकोपायबुद्ध्या वा श्रद्धयाऽभ्युपेयताम्. (तृतीयमाह्निकम्).

The Vedas are man-made.

Thus we have proved that all letters partake of the character of an effect. Anything articulate, viz., a word, constituted by letters, a sentence, etc., owes its origin to a person who is its author. Thus the authorship of a person with regard to words, sentences, etc., is established.

Even if we admit that the words are eternal then it seems to us to be highly probable that a sentence is composed by a person since it is a combination of words. Hence how can we say that the Vedas are eternal, i.e., they have not been composed by a person?

पदनित्यत्वपक्षेऽपि वाक्ये तद्रचनात्मके,
कर्तृत्वसम्भवात्पुंसो वेदः कथमकृत्रिमः.

All the orderly arrangements are composed by an agent. The Vedic sentences are such an orderly arrangement. Therefore, they are composed by an agent. The major, premise is materially valid. The sentences of Classical Sanskrit literature are composed by an agent. They serve as a positive instance. The reason, put forward by us, possesses all the five conditions requisite for a sound reason. The above reason is also strengthened by an ancillary argument. Hence it should not be held that the reason in question does not belong to the subject of inference. Let us cite as few Vedic sentences, viz. शन्नो देवीरभीष्टये etc.,

and examine them. Each of these sentences is an orderly arrangement of words containing accents properly distributed and other signs of arrangement. We directly know that the reason in question belongs to the Vedic sentences referred to.

The reason in question is not contradictorily related to the major term since it belongs to the positive instances such as the epic Kumara-sambhava. It is a truism that the said epic is the work of an author and that it contains the orderly arrangement of words. The reason in question is not doubtful since an orderly arrangement does belong both to the objects which have an author and does not to the objects which have no author. No orderly arrangement is noticed in the sky which has no author or in the sky-flower, etc. having no author.

The presence of the reason in question is not contradicted by some other sources of true knowledge. It has not been definitely proved either by perception or by the Vedas that the Vedas have no author.

The reason in question is not suspended by a forceful counter-argument. Just as when we perceive the common property of the two things but not their distinctive marks, a doubt arises in our mind in the form "Is it a man or a post?". If one puts forward a reason to prove that the Vedas have an author and another person advances a counter-reason to prove that the Vedas have no author then no decision is reached. But no such counter-argument has been stated.

In order to prove that atoms are non-eternal if one argues because it has limited extension then the generalisation is wrong. There is no relation of invariable concomitance holding between the middle and the major terms. Such an objection does not apply to the syllogism in question. An arrangement is invariably effectuated by an author. As smoke owes its existence to fire and points to it so an arrangement owes its existence to an agent and indicates its existence. Therefore, the reason in question is sound and conducive to the conclusion.

The Vedas are not eternal

The Mimāmsakas hold that the argument of the Naiyāyikas is counteracted by another argument. Therefore, the above mark is not convincing. The counter-argument, put forward by the Naiyayikas, the Vedists, is as follows :

'When one studies the Vedas he sits at the feet of his preceptor in order to learn them as we do now. The very phrase "The study of the Vedas" denotes the learning of the Vedas from a preceptor by a pupil (who receives all the words of the Vedas in their proper order from the mouth of the preceptor and gets them by heart). The learning of the Vedas in such a manner is called Vedādhyayana. The very word 'Vedādhyayana' points to the thesis that the Vedas are eternal.' (If somebody is the author of the Vedas he has not learnt them from his preceptor. If he does not learn them from his preceptor then he is not a competent teacher. In order to make the study of the Vedas possible the series of the teachers of the Vedas must remain uninterrupted i.e., beginningless. Thus there is no author of the Vedas, the Vedists say).

The argument is not sound. An argument like the above one does not draw a conclusion. Only from the meaning of the word 'adhyayana' it is not reasonable to arrive at the conclusion that the Vedas are eternal. The above reason is fallacious. We can also hold like-wise that the Mahābhārata has no author i.e. it is also eternal. He who studies the great epic of Bharata learns it from his teacher. He has also learnt it from his teacher and so on *ad infinitum*. The study of the Mahabharata implies the learning of it from a competent teacher like the study of the same epic at the modern age.

Now, the Mimamsakas, the atheists, may contend that there is a piece of uncontradicted recollection that the Mahabharata has an author. If this is their contention then it may also be held that the lord of all beings (Prajapati) is truly remembered by all as the author of the Vedas. Now, the Mimamsakas may defend their case with the remark that the Vedic mantra which refers to the authorship of Prajapati has no literal meaning. It represents an allegory since the literal meaning involves contradiction. In the above mantra it has been stated that the four Vedas, the four castes and the four stages of life have been created by Prajapati.

The Naiyayikas, the Vedists, say in reply to the above contention that the reference to the authorship of the son of Parasara contained in the Mahabharata may have as well some other purpose to serve. It does not purport to convey that Vyasa has composed the Mahabharata.

As the Mimamsakas hold that the Lord of all beings is extolled in the Vedic mantras which involve references to him so the Naiyayikas

may as well say that the son of Satyavati, i.e., Vyasa, has been eulogised in the verses which refer to him.

Now, the Mimamsakas may contend that no body has direct acquaintance with the fact that god has composed the Vedas. In reply to this it may be pointed out "Have your ancestors seen Dvaipayana Vyasa who was born in an island with their own eyes?" द्वैपायनोऽपि किं दृष्टो भवत्पितृपितामहैः? (चतुर्थमाह्निकम्)

If the Mimamsakas press their point saying that they possess unmistaken memory of tradition that the son of Satyavati has composed the Mahabharata then the Naiyayikas may argue that there is a popular and unflinching belief which is widely accepted that Prajapati is the author of the Vedas.

The Mimamsakas continue to argue. They say "Oh Sir; why do you turn aside from the right path, being deceived by the rumour current in the circle of carters and such other persons who are devoid of the power of discretion?" The Naiyayikas may retort that when one is advised by his parents to do something small he undertakes it out of his implicit confidence in their advice. But if one performs a Vedic rite which entails an expenditure of a huge sum and demands a lot of troubles to undergo without remembering the advisor then he surely commits a great blunder. One cannot reasonably take action upon the words of the Vedas if the author of the Vedas is not remembered by him just as one cannot attach any importance to a mutilated book containing poems of great and small poets. In any case the author should be recollected. One cannot suggest that the continuity of the Vedic tradition might have been broken in the past so the author of the Vedas could not be remembered. Just as we cannot remember the name of the founder of a deserted old well as well as a garden not visited by persons. Therefore, the author of the Vedas must be remembered. The Mimamsakas join issue with the Naiyayikas and hold that the author of the Vedas is not only not remembered but also cannot be recollected. Memory is always based upon experience. Nobody has an experience of the author of the Vedas since there is no creation of the world. Even if it is admitted that the author of the Vedas exists and that he is not visible as he is incorporeal.

Even though we assume that god is corporeal and that he is visible in the beginning of creation yet nobody sees him compose the Vedas : तदानीं दृश्यमानोऽपि वेदं कुर्वन्न दृश्यते. (चतुर्थमाह्निकम्).

Though we admit that the people see him read the Vedas yet a doubt arises in their mind whether or not he has composed the Vedas or he reads the Vedas written by somebody else. Then a fresh doubt appears in our mind whether or not he has really composed the Vedas.

If nobody directly knows that god has composed the Vedas and everybody makes an appeal to memory as the source of the knowledge of god, then the series of recollections, handed down from one generation to another, is really unfounded. It looks like a row of blind men in which one blind man is following another : स्मृति प्रबन्धसिद्धाऽपि स्पृशत्यन्धपरम्पराम्. (चतुर्थमाह्निकम्).

One holds that the sages have mystic intuition of god as the author of the Vedas. But we, the Mimāmsakas, do not subscribe to this view. How can we follow the steps of the Naiyāyikas (Vedists) (गच्छेम तत्पथं कथम्) since we do not place our confidence in their assumption?

If it is held that the Vedas themselves declare that god is the author of them then it is a glaring instance of circular reasoning. The Vedas are the source of true knowledge because god is their author. Again, we truly know that god is their author since the Vedas are the source of true knowledge : वेदात्कर्त्रवबोधे तु स्पष्टमन्योन्यसंश्रयम्, ततो वेदप्रमाणत्वं वेदात्कर्तुश्च निश्चयः. (चतुर्थमाह्निकम्).

(Now, the Mimamsakas assert their conclusion in the light of the above negative criticism). The Naiyayikas have arrived at an erroneous conclusion since they have based their view upon the Arthavada portion of the Vedas. They have failed to distinguish the arthavadas from the mantras which are an embodiment of injunction since they have failed to study the Vedas in their proper order. They have not dived deep into the character of the Vedic mantra. They have taken only a superficial view of the mantras. Nobody really recollects the author of the Vedas. Thus we hold that the Vedas have not been composed since we do not remember the author of the Vedas who must have been remembered by us. We do not put our reason in the proper syllogistic language. Hence, the charge that the middle term does not belong to the minor term should not be levelled against the above argument. The exact middle term is that it is that the author of which is not rememered (The syllogism runs thus : All the works the author of which is not remembered are such as have no author. The Vedas are such a work. Therefore the Vedas are such as have no author).

A review of the above thesis is as follows : The Mimamsakas have recourse to such a path as does not obey the rules or logical discipline. They have abandoned the reason which was put forward at the outset. They have at first tried to establish that the study of the Vedas pre-suppose an instruction from a preceptor by means of a reason. The implication of this argument is that the Vedas are eternal. Now, they advance another reason "being a work the author of which is not remembered." The Mimamsakas have raised an important point which is not to be set aside as a minor one. Do they intend to establish the conclusion that the Vedas have not been composed by means of an independent reason "being a work the author of which is not remembered?" Or, do they intend to counteract the reason "being an arrangement of words", put forward by us? It is not logical to hold that a syllogistic argument supersedes another such argument. It cannot be proved that like perception and verbal testimony an inference sets aside another inference. If two syllogistic arguments are equal in strength then they will contradict each other because of their equal strength. If they are of unequal strength then that which makes an argument weak will also invalidate it. In that case it is superflous to assume that an inference is set aside by another inference. The Mimamsakas may hold that they have put forward the counter-argument in order to set aside the reason offered by the Naiyayikas. But such a statement is contrary to reasoning. The two reasons which point to the two properties contradictorily opposed to each other cannot be simultaneously applied to the same substratum–the subject of inference. Therefore, in this case, one of them is surely fallacious. All the objects of the world cannot have two such parts as remain incompatible with each other. Therefore one of these two reasons is surely fallacious. As it is fallacious so it cannot draw the conclusion, which is expected of it. Therefore, no purpose will be served if the opponents put forward a reason to cancel another reason. If a counter reason is simply advanced the syllogistic argument which it intends to contradict does not come out to be fallacious. There is no such fallacy as is called "Viruddha-avyabhicari" (विरुद्धाव्यभिचारी).[1]

Now, let us see which of the above two reasons fails to draw the conclusion. The two reasons are as follows : (1) being an arrangement

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1. *The term in question denotes that syllogistic argument is fallacious if another true reason being advanced, contradicts the conclusion of the above syllogistic argument.*

of words and (2) being that the author of which is not remembered. The decision on this point is this. The reason "being an arrangement of words" is competent to draw the conclusion since nobody has ever seen that the words arrange themselves without being arranged by a person. रचनात्वाद्, अस्मर्यमाणकर्तृकत्वाद्.

Oh revered sirs : Oh great men who move in the circle of experienced persons! Have you ever seen or heard in this world that the words in a sentence combine themselves by their inherent power? If it is held that the words contained in the Vedas get themselves combined by their innate nature then why do not the threads which make up a cloth spontaneously combine themselves?

In the sentences, viz., "शन्नो देवीरभिष्टये", "नारायणं नमस्कृत्य", "अस्त्युत्तरस्यां दिशि देवतात्मा" etc., the arrangement of words is the same. But if we hold that in some of these sentences the words have been arranged by a person and that in other sentences they have been arranged by no person then the source of such a differential treatment is only traced to a great confusion of mind. Those who indulge in such a conjecture should have also held that smoke is sometimes produced by fire and that it is not also sometimes produced by fire.

Now, the Mimamsakas make the following ironical remakrs, viz. "The Vedas have become equal in rank with the Kumarasambhava of Kalidasa! Alas the Naiyayikas, the foremost believers (the vedists), have established the authority of the Vedas!"

"No need of derision", Say the Naiyayikas in reply to the above remarks. The Vedas resemble the epic 'Kumara-sambhava' only in the arrangement of words but in nothing else. If we (the Naiyayikas) say this much then they do not deserve to be laughed at for this only. Does not soundness belong to the Vedas alike as it does to the sound produced by conch-shell? Does not existence inhere in the Vedas as it does in all the objects? The works of the poets like Kalidasa etc. bear the stamp of their author on their face. But the Vedic works are entirely different from them. When the Vedic works are learnt by us we discover the marks of uniqueness inherent in them.

There are uses of words, verbs, prepositions etc. in the Vedic literature. But there is much novelty in their use. The Vedic works contain laudation, condemnation, the story narrated by a single person,

the story narrated by two or more persons and other matters not to be found in Classical Sanskrit literature.

Each Vedic Samhita (a Vedic anthology) admits of various recensions.[1] The matter which has been discussed in one recension of a particular Vedas is not to be found in another recension of the same Veda. Such a diversity of forms and matters is not to be found in Classical Sanskrit literature.

Thus, the students of Vedic literature form their opinion from its uncommon character about the Vedas that the Vedic works have not been composed by an author. Therefore, the Mimamsakas drink the cup of glory in this world.

We, the Naiyayikas, join issue with them and refute their hypothesis. Let them drink the cup of glory or a cup of milk or medicated clarified butter in order to remove the dullness of their intellect. But there is no mistake in our hypothesis that the Vedas have been composed by an author.

The combination of parts of a jar is different from that of parts of a mountain. Still the combination of parts is due to the activity of an agent, i.e., it presupposes the existence of a person who combines the parts. Similarly, the arrangement of words, etc., in the Vedas is different from that of words etc. in a book of the classical period. Though the arrangement is different yet there is no doubt about the fact that it is due to the activity of an author.

We have got something to say regarding this matter. We say this much only that as the arrangement of words in the Vedas is a class by itself so one should infer that the author of the Vedas is necessarily an extra-ordinary person. But it becomes absurd to deny the existence of god. We have already stated this view. Nobody disputes that the great works of Kalidasa and other great poets which have an aesthetic appeal, have been composed by an author. It is also experienced that each of these works has its distinctive mark.

(The poetic expressions of Kalidasa are as if dipped by nectar, besmeared by sandal paste and polished by the moonbeams. Though the sentences of Bana Bhatta consist of long compounds yet they have charmed the circle of poets, rousing emotions as they do. Similarly,

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1. *Then which version is valid and why? Why are there other versions which are fake or quasi-fake? If in one recension order of mantras is different, in the other the words are different.*

in each literary work some diversities are noticed.) The very nature of the Vedas suggests that they have no author because nouns, verbs etc., have been strangely used in them. It is indeed a novel argument which has merely verbal significance. If you have implicit confidence in the characteristic feature of the Vedas then why do you not apply your attention to examine the other characteristic feature of them, viz., the narration of the created objects? The Vedic sentences which involve references to the created objects run thus:–"Babara, the son of Pravahana desired" (बबरः प्रावाहणिरकामयत), "Kusura Vinda, the son of Uddalaka, desired" (कुसुरविन्द औद्दालकिरकामयत) "Oh Pururavas! do not give up your life." (पुरुरवो मा स्पृया) etc. Now, the Mimamsakas may contend that they are created in each cycle of new world. Hence they are eternal in this sense. Then, the Naiyayikas may as well say that the Vedas are different in each emergence of the new World. It has been stated that after the expiry of each Manu era the fresh Vedas are composed : प्रतिमन्वन्तरं चैषा श्रुतिरन्या विधीयते.

If we frame the hypothesis that the Vedas are eternal seeing the characteristic features of the Vedas then the said hypothesis is only based upon pure imagination but is not established by a proof.

If we try to explain away the created objects mentioned in the Vedas then the explanation is not reliable. The students of Vedic literature in course of its study come across many terms which denote created objects. Therefore, the Vedas are not eternal. Therefore, the reason 'being an arrangement of words' is not impotent to draw a true conclusion. But the counter-reason 'non-remembrance of an author' is incapable of drawing the conclusion since it has not been proved that the author of the Vedas is not remembered. Even if it is admitted that no author of the Vedas is remembered then the non-remembrance of such an author does not necessarily point to the absence of an author since it may be otherwise explained. The composition of the Vedas is not remembered. As the author of the Vedas is distinct from all other persons so he has no definite body. Consequently, nobody can remember him as that particular person who has composed the Vedas as we do remember Panini or Pingala as an author of a particular work. It is not true that god does not exist since inferential and verbal knowledge point to his existence. The Mimamsakas argue that the Vedas are eternal because the Vedas have such an author as is not remembered. The rule

of inference is that the reason must belong to the subject of inference. The reason in question is definitely subjective. In other words, the person who is going to infer can only know whether or not the reason belongs to the subject of inference. It is impossible for all persons to determine whether or not the reason in question belongs to the subject of inference. How do you know that all persons do not remember the author of the Vedas? You do not intuit the mind of all persons. If you had done so you would have been omniscient. You cannot arrive at a generalisation based upon an analogical argument, viz. "As I do not remember such an author so all other persons do not remember him." Thus, such a generalisation is too wide. Therefore the reason "Being that the author of which is not remembered" is truly unknowable. Again, if we do not remember the author of the Vedas then the zeal for performing the Vedic rites on the part of the intelligent persons will gradually fade away since an advice without an advisor is impossible. Even if we admit that such an advice is a possibility then we cannot place our confidence in it since the source of its validity has not been determined. (We have rather positive apathy for sentence which is self-caused, i.e., which does not come from the lips of a speaker, not to speak of any regard for it). We have stated before that the truth of a sentence is not asserted if it does not merely involve self-contradiction. As the respectable persons have absolute reliance upon the trustworthy persons so it is possible that they unhesitatingly observe the Vedic rites. Thus the non-remembrance of an author cannot be logically taken as a counter-reason of being an arrangement of words.

The said reason advanced by the Mimamsakas does not independently prove that the author of the Vedas does not exist. It really amounts to the non-apprehension of the author of the Vedas. Such a view is not tenable *since the author of the Vedas is an inference.* What is inferred is also known. The Mimamsakas may contend that the inferential knowledge of the author of the Vedas is not logically tenable because it has been contradicted by the non-remembrance of the author of the Vedas. But such a contention is a glaring instance of vicious circle since if the said non-remembrance is established then the said inference is contradicted and if the said inference is contradicted then the said non-remembrance is established. The Mimamsakas may point out that the establishment of the truth of the said inference suffers from the same defect. The truth of the deduction depends upon the truth

of the major premise in question, i.e., induction. The truth of the said inference does not depend upon the contradiction of the truth of the said non-remembrance.

The Mimamsakas say that the above reason does not directly prove the absence of authorship of the Vedas. But they do not believe in the existence of transcendental objects like god, etc. They ask their opponents to furnish them with the proof with regard to the hypothesis that the Vedas have been composed by a person. As the opponents cannot supply with such a proof so non-remembrance enforces on our mind its resultant knowledge that the author of the Vedas does not exist. The Naiyayikas say in reply to this argument that such a conclusion might have been accepted if there had been no inference. We have already stated that the Vedas have an author because they possess an arrangement of words.

The Mimamsakas have said that the origin of the Vedas cannot be traced to a person. Such a statement is not fair. When we perceive a new curtain, etc. how do we determine the existence of a weaver who is beyond the ken of our vision?

We infer the existence of a weaver who has made a cloth, etc. from the object which has been created by him. Similarly, we infer the existence of the author of the Vedas from the arrangement of words contained in them (the Vedas).

A soul cannot advise others if he does not possess a body. Hence we can assume that god sometimes has a body. As he has no permanent body so he is not remembered like the other authors, viz., Vyasa etc.

As a poet who belongs to our age is known as the author of a particular poem by his contemporary fellows so god will also be known as the author of the Vedas by his contemporary fellows.

As the misapprehension regarding the poem that it has been composed by some body else but not by the said poet is removed so the erroneous knowledge about the authorship of the Vedas will be also dispelled.

It has been stated in connection with the definition of perception that a transcendental object which is inferred by us is perceived by the sages.

Thus we see that perception and inference are the two main sources of knowledge about the authorship of the Vedas. If memory is held to be the source of such knowledge then it has the chance of being discredited.

Hence, in order to repudiate the hypothesis that god is the author of the Vedas, memory which has been taken as the only source of such authorship by the opponents has been discredited on the ground that it is based upon the Arthavada section of the Vedas. Such a criticism is pointless. We have already indicated as to how perception and inference threw light on the authorship of the Vedas.

The Mimamsakas have stated that the hypothesis of the Naiyayikas involves circular reasoning. The Vedas are the source of true knowledge because they have been composed by omniscient god and god exists because the Vedas point to his existence. तदपीतरेतराश्रयमभाषि पुरुषोक्ते वेदे प्रामाण्यं वेदप्रामाण्यात्पुरुषसिद्धिः.

God is not perceived like colour etc. Moreover, he is not also an object of inner perception like pleasure etc. He is not also an object of transcendental perception of the sages since they have not established it as existent. God is not an inference since an inference in this case cannot be based upon perception. God lies beyond the range of perception. Every case of inference is based upon universal concomitance. There is no mark which may be universally and invariably connected with god. Inference based upon general ground is not applicable to god. Such a general mark is conspicuous by its absence. The earth and other such objects cannot be proved to be effects. At least no intelligent thinker will endorse this hypothesis. The unity of the parts of a mountain does not have the way for postulating a creator. The union of the parts of a mountain is distinct from a pot which is created by its maker. The parts of a mountain have assembled and been united together in a distinct way which excludes the idea that it is an effect. If for the sake of argument it is admitted that it has a beginning in time and is an effect, still it is not an invariable mark of the existence of god just like grass etc. The purport of the statement is that mountains etc. have a natural growth like that of grass etc. The vegetables and plants which grow wildly do not depend upon cultivators. Moreover, at the time of growth, they are never perceived as such. As no creator is known to us as perceived. His non-perception is enough to establish his non-existence. But in the case of Earth and vast sheets of water the creator may be postulated as distinct from the visible creators. But such a postulation is not tenable since the mark will be too wide to arrive at a definite conclusion. If the case of the union of parts of a mountain is possible without a creator,

the creation of Earth and water may be possible by a natural process. Therefore, the inference is fallacious. It is as fallacious as the inference that he is a Brahmin since he is a man. An inference must be based upon experience. This much may be admitted that the so-called creator is no better than a potter. Such as inference is contradicted since other specific characters as expected do not follow from the above conclusion.

A creator who has movement in the shape of intervening process has a body like a potter. If he has a body, he is not omniscient. He has imperfection and other limitations of his mental powers. If we infer the existence of god, he is no better than a potter. The creator of Earth is no better than a potter. But his other specific attributes cannot be established. How are they inferred? Such a probandum has no similar instance to confirm its establishment. If the creator is merely established, then how will his specific attributes be established or known? How will corporeal or incorporeal god create the earth etc.? In this connection our observation is that incorporeal creator is never seen. If he is corporeal, his body is an effect like that of Caitra (a man). Is the body of god, being an effect, created by himself or is it created by another god? It is unwisely rash to say that he creates his own body. If another creator is assumed for his body then an infinite series of creators will be the logical conclusion.

Such a conclusion is defective as it is based upon no source of knowledge. You are perplexed to establish a single god. What will happen to you if you try to prove the existence of an infinite number of gods. Will he create the universe by physical operation like potter? Or, will he create it by his mere will? These hypotheses are hard to establish. By physical operation nobody can create by hundreds of mythical years. Moreover, the unconscious atoms do not obey the will of him.

Moreover, the hypothesis is open to other charges. Has he any purpose to serve by creating the universe? Or, does he create the universe, having no purpose to serve? The second hypothesis is absurd since if he has no purpose to serve by creating the universe, then he is open to the charge of doing imprudent act. The first hypothesis requires no scrutiny since the contenders do not subscribe to it.

God has no desire to fulfil. As he is perfect, he enjoys eternal bliss. He had neither love nor hatred. He is free from passions. He has no end to realize by engaging himself in the task of creating the universe.

We do not make out what is his object to serve. Does he undertake it out of compassions? Before the creation in the universe the individual souls are free from all passions, sufferings etc i.e. impurities like the liberated souls. Therefore they did not deserve compassion.

The very compassionate persons feel compassion only when their heart melts with pity observing the repeated sufferings of the creatures. But no body feels for the souls having no sorrow and other sources of sufferings like the soul at in the state of liberty. He also does not know to create such a world which provides us with enjoyments of pleasures alone. Even if he makes such a provision, such enjoyment is only short-lived. Such a weak defence does not carry any weight. Nothing is impossible for the great Lord since he enjoys limitless independence, and all the objects, in that case, submit to his inviolable command. If the contenders hold that the Lord of the creatures takes into consideration all the acts, good and evil, performed by the creatures and creats the world as the creatures deserve, such an explanation is not satisfactory. Let the unmerited acts alone create the world and the Lord of creatures has no business at all. The theorist may contend that the matter or elements require the guidance of the conscious being and that god is the fittest soul to create the world out of the unconscious materials. Such an assumption is not tenable. The souls are conscious beings who are competent to discharge the function of supervisors since all such materials are for them. There is no need of assuming another supervisor. Moreover, his absolute majesty is curtailed, being dependent upon the acts of all souls. Such limited majesty has no use at all. No king likes to enjoy a kingdom if he is to depend absolutely upon his minister and has no power to make choice of things and is to accpet the choice of his minister as his own. If he is Lord, he should have absolute independence. If he cannot exert his own independence, such a Lord is useless. No body enquires the motives of the Lord if he does something.

The creator moves to create this universe from the sportive spirit. If you hold that the creator enjoys the feat of sport by creating this world having good and evil elements then we take an exception to this view that the world being devoid of pleasure as a result of his sport the god parts with his nature in the shape of blissfulness which he possessed before the creation of the world since he has all his desires fulfilled but no wants.

The great souls should not indulge in such sports as require much exertion and create panic in the hearts of all without an exception. Hence the Protector of the world is neither a creator nor a destroyer of it.

If god preserves the acts of all creatures of the three divisions of the universe then the possibility of the fruition of all acts at a time will be ruled out. In other words, the goal of universal liberation will be never reached. If the work ceases then the recreation of the world will not be possible since the varieties of the world will not be possible having no different kinds of acts as their efficient causes.

Now another hypothesis states that god goes on functioning for a period of a hundred years of which a day is much longer than the age of the earth and that after this period he feels a desire to destroy the created world. As a result the dissolution of the universe takes place. This period is mythological night of Brahman. When this night is over he feels an inclination again to create the world. By his desire the efficacy of the latent acts revives and the acts, being active, construct this world. This hypothesis is not tenable.

If the creation and the destruction of the world depend upon the desire of the god, let it be alone the cause of the appearance and the disappearance of the world.

Let it be so. There is no need of the hypothesis of acts. If we examine the hypothesis as revised closely, we find that it is riddled with the three unanswerable objections. These are as follows, viz., (1) His Majesty turns out to be merciless; (2) He becomes merciless without any rhyme and reason since his act of creation of the world is cruel; and as (3) the desire of god is competent enough to bestow good and bad consequences, the injunctions and prohibitions of the Vedas become gratuituous assumptions.

Another fresh problem appears to discredit the Nyaya hypothesis. It is this that the non-realization of the state of perfection is the inevitable logical conclusion since the desire of god overrules everything and if the god so desires, the liberated souls may be again bound down by the state of bondage. In other words they may be reborn as ordinary creatures. Therefore, we conclude that god is not responsible for the creation and the destruction of the world. The chain of logical arguments shows clearly that inference has no capacity for demonstrating the existence of god. Comparison has no scope at all. The eternal Vedas cannot rightly

point to the existence of god. If the god is the author of the Vedas then the infidels like us can place no confidence in the statement of the Vedas. तत्प्रणीते तु विस्रम्भः कथं भवतु मादृशाम्. If it is stated that the Vedas are true because the god is their author and that god exists since the Vedas are the source of his existence then the argument is riddled with the unanswerable vicious circle. The existence of god cannot be established. किं चागमस्य प्रामाण्यं तत्प्रणीतत्वहेतुकम्, तत्प्रामाण्याच्च तत्सिद्धिरित्यन्योऽन्याश्रयं भवेत्. अन्यथाऽनुपपत्त्या तु न शक्यो लब्धुमीश्वरः. (तृतीयमाह्निकम्) If it is argued that the hypothesis of god is only a fair presumption to explain the existence of the world then we can boldly assert that such a presumption is not necessary as the world may be explained otherwise since all the sources of valid knowledge acceptable to us fail to establish the existence of god, god is conspicuous by his absence.

It is not fair to believe in the existence of god on the strength of a rumour current in the popular mind that god exists. It is no better than the baseless heresy that a Yaksa (a kind of spirit) lives on the banian tree. The result of the close examination reveals that the elaborate statement in the mythological story of the creation and the destruction of the universe goes in vain since the moral philosophers cannot lend their support to such a whimsical world without plan and purpose.

The invalidity of the Vedas

Veracity does not belong to the Vedas unlike health which is the property of a sound body. The body of the Vedas suffers from many defects such as falsehood, etc.

One who is desirous of getting animals should perform the Chitra sacrifice–चित्रया यजेत पशुकामः. One who intends to get a son should perform Putresti sacrifice–यजेत पुत्रकामः पुत्रेष्ट्या. On the completion of these sacrifices the performer does not invariably obtain the result. Therefore the injunctions, prescribing Chitra sacrifice and its like, are false.

The defender of the truth of the Vedas meets the objection thus. What is the meaning of the first injunction. The sentence proposes to import that he who intends to get an animal should perform the above *isti* (Yajna). We are to prove that one obtains animals just after the conclusion of the said ishti (इष्टि). Then why are not the injunctions prescribing the Chitra sacrifice, etc. true?

In the injunctions, viz., "One should perform a sacrifice as long as he lives"–यावज्जीवं यजेत. "One should offer libation as long as he lives" यावज्जीवं जुहुयात् nothing is stated about the prolongation of the life of the performer of a sacrifice since life is not the result of such actions. Similarly, as animals do not result from the Chitra-sacrifice so desire for animals should qualify the performer of the sacrifice. When one knows for certain that he cannot gain animals by means of the said sacrifice he may not perform the sacrifice.

Reflecting on the nature of an action we come to know that a result which a sacrifice is proclaimed to yield will follow it in close succession since an effect is seen to follow from an act in immediate succession. Some say that an act should produce its effect during its life time since when our limbs are pressed we enjoy pleasure. One who undertakes to perform a sacrifice does so under the impression that the feeling of want which pains him will be removed at once. The act of sacrifice, being an act, will perish after sometime. Such being the nature of a sacrifice how can it yield the so-called effect in the remote future?

Some argue that when an act had existed it did not yield its result. When the said result is produced the act does not exist. In that case how can we causally connect a sacrifice with the result? How will a sacrifice yield the result, having perished at the time of its fruition? Moreover when the said result is obtained in some other time some other tangible causes are noticed to condition it. A sincere service, rendered to the owner of animals, is the tangible cause of getting animals. As such a visible cause is noticed so no person of clear understanding will subscribe to the hypothesis that a sacrifice like Chitra, etc., the result of which is not tangibly established, produces the said result. Thus we hold that the injunctions which prescribe sacrifices like Chitra, etc., are false. तस्मादसत्याश्चित्रादिचोदनाः.

To hoodwink the gullibles, Jayanta has written in the Nyayamanjari that my grandfather performed a Yajna to get a village. After the Yajna he got the village as a gift from the king : अस्मत्पितामह एव ग्रामकामः सांग्रहणीं कृतवान्. स इष्टिसमाप्तिसमनन्तरमेव गौरमूलकं ग्रामभवाय. (न्यायमंजरी, चतुर्थमाह्निकम्, पंडितराज सूर्यनारायण शुक्ल संस्करणम्, 1/250)

If this is true, it can be explained away in Charvakian way without any difficulty. His grandfather had an understanding with king that he

would gift him the village after he had performed the Yajna so that people continue to believe in the efficacy of the Vedic rituals and do not create problems for the king. Or when his grandfather performed the Yajna, he sent his minions to the king to convince him to pay the village to him and the king did so lest any untoward should happen in the kingdom owing to the Yajna. In neither way, the efficacy of Yajna is established. Jayanta has made himself a fool by advancing such a childish and weak argument in favour of the efficacy of Yajnas.

If the Vedic yajnas were so efficacious, why did the priests fail to get back the territories occupied by the Turks, Mughals and others by performing such Yajnas? Why could not they get back even the Ramajanmabhoomi temple with help of the Yajnas?

We cannot pin our faith in the truth of the Vedic injunction which prescribes sacrifices like Chitra, etc., since they do not yield the promised result. Similarly, we are not convinced of the truth of the other Vedic injunctions prescribing Agnihotra sacrifice and others : चित्रादिवचसामेवमपचारस्य दर्शनात्, अनाश्वासोऽग्निहोत्रादिचोदनास्वपि जायते.

The injunctions which prescribe Agnihotra, etc., are false since they are part and parcel of the Vedic sentences like the Vedic injunctions enjoining the sacrifices like Chitra, etc. They are not held to be true because there is no agreement between a promise and its fulfilment. It should also be noted that there is also discrepancy between an injunction and its result in case of the Vedic injunctions "One who desires to have a son should perform the putra-isti-sacrifice."

Sometimes, we notice just the opposite of what has been stated in the Vedas (A person who had undertaken the sacrifice of Agnihotra should preserve the fire kindled at the time of his marriage ceremony as long as he lives. The fire is preserved in a pot. After his demise, the pot, containing the said fire, is taken to the cremation ground. His funeral pyre is set to fire only by means of this preserved fire. If this fire is not available the dead body of the performer of an Agnihotra sacrifice will not be burnt). In the Vedas the collection of the pot, containing the preserved fire, has been enjoined. Having given instruction relating to the above act the Vedas declare that this dead person, the performer of Agnihotra sacrifice armed with the instrument of sacrifice, goes to heaven. What is the meaning of the demonstrative pronoun 'this' (एषः), used in the Vedic text? If it is held that 'this' signifies the soul

then it has only a secondary meaning since the soul is a transcendental object. The soul does not wield the implements of a sacrifice, viz., a wood-knife, a pot-sherd, etc. Therefore the pronoun 'this' significes the body. But the body does not go to heaven since the body is reduced to ashes. This state of the body is opposed to its going to heaven. Thus the result, declared by the Vedas, is reversed. The Vedas are not true since there is no agreement between a promise and its fulfilment and there is a reversal of the declared result : एवं चासंवादविसंवादाभ्यामप्रमाणं वेदः.

The Vedas are false since they involve inner contradictions : व्याघाताच्च. There are three injunctions in the Vedas, viz., (1) "One should offer libation after sun-rise"–उदिते होतव्यम्. (2) "One should offer libation just before sun-rise"–अनुदिते होतव्यम्, and (3) "One should offer libation in the early morning, i.e., long before sun-rise"–समयांध्युषिते होतव्यम्. Having prescribed these three period of time of offering libation they (these hours of libation) have been prohibited by artha-vadas which condemn such libations at these periods. If one offer libation after sun-rise then the dog called Syama licks the content of his libation : श्यामो वा अस्याहुतिमभ्यवहरति य उदिते जुहोति. If one offers libation long before sun-rise, Sabala licks the content of his libation : शबलो वा अस्याहुतिमभ्यवहरति योऽनुदिते जुहोति. If one offers libation just before sun-rise then the dogs Syama and Sabala lick the content of his libation : श्यामशबलावस्याहुतिमभ्यवहरतो यः समयाध्युषिते जुहोति. The defenders of the Vedas cannot hold that these are nominal artha-vadas having nothing to import. The reason behind our statement is this that a praise amount to an injunction and condemnation indicates a prohibition. As a praise and an injunction have the same meaning to import so condemnation and prohibition imply the same sense.

The defenders of the Vedas may argue that when one condemns something he does not do it for the sake of mere censure but when he condemns something he does it for praising something else. Such a contention is not tenable. The specified periods of time have been prohibited. No hour remains in order to be praised by this censure. Therefore the Vedas are false since they impart incompatible instructions, i.e., they involve contradiction.

The Vedas are false since they contain repetition : पौनरुक्त्याच्च. (The hotri priest utters a Vedic mantra in order to kindle fire. This mantra

is called Samidheni. Or, the hotr priest places faggots on fire uttering a Vedic mantra. This mantra is called Samidheni. These Samidheni mantras are eleven in number. Each mantra has its distinct designation). The first one of these Samidhenis is called the *prathama rik*. The last one is called the *Uttama rik*. It has been enjoined that *the prathama rik is to be repeated three times and the uttama rik is* also to be repeated thrice. If these mantras are recited thrice, such a recitation amounts to repetition. As the Vedas prescribe to read out a mantra again and again so they are open to the charge of repetition. If the single recitation of a mantra bears fruit then the thrice recitation of the Mantra is redundant. Therefore the Vedas are not true since they contain false statements, involve contradiction and encourage idle repetition.

The author of the Nyaya-sutra says that in case of Putra-ishti-sacrifice the Vedas make a false statement. When they enjoin the offer of libation they involve contradiction. When they advise to utter a mantra again and again they expose themselves to the charge of repetition. The Vedas are not true since they suffer from these defects : तदप्रामाण्यमनृतव्याघातपुनरुक्तदोषेभ्यः (न्यायदर्शनम् 1-5-56)

Invalidity owing to Arthavadas[1]

Though you are adept in the art of logic yet you have not been able even today to remove all the defects to which the Vedas are exposed.

Let us reaffirm defects which belong to the Vedas. He wept. As he wept so acquired the epithet 'Rudra' सोऽरोदीद्यदरोदीत्तद्रुद्रस्य रुद्रत्वम्. The lord of all beings heated his own fat. Then he poured libation of the same into fire. But a goat came up as a result of his deed : प्रजापतिरात्मनो वपामुदखिदत्तामग्नौ प्रागृह्णात् ततोऽजस्तूपर उदगात्. Gods became confused when they had come to know about divine worship : दैवा वै देवयजनमध्यवसाय दिशो न प्राजानन्. Are these arthavadas literally true? Or, do they advise us to discharge some duty? Or do they play the part of a means to an end which has been referred to by the Vedic injunctions containing verbs in the subjunctive mood (लिङ्)? In any case, they are encircled by inconsistencies on all sides. If one holds that arthavadas contain a record of events which happened then such a statement is contradicted by other proofs. Thus the Vedas cannot save themselves from the charge

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1. *Arthavada means praise, condemnation, mythological stories, etc.*

of untruth as they contain such matters as are contradicted. There is no proof in support of the correctness of statements about weeping, the heating of fat, confusion. etc.

Moreover, the artha-vadas such as the inner organ is prone to theft, everybody tells a lie, etc. : स्तेनं मनोऽनृतवादिनी वाक्, inform us of such matters as are contradicted by other proofs. It is a truism that everybody does not naturally tell a lie and that the inner organ of everybody is not prone to theft.

Moreover, smoke has been seen during the day as rising from fire but the brightness of fire has not been seen. For this reason the brightness of fire is seen at night but not smoke : धूम एवाग्नेर्दिवा ददृशे नार्चिस्तस्मादचिरेवाऽग्नेर्नक्तं ददृशे न धूम इति. This is another instance of arthavada the subject-matter of which is contradicted by perception since the above two objects are perceived when we see them.

Let us cite another instance of arthavada the content of which is contradicted by perception. It states "We do not know whether we are Brahmanas or not" : एतन्न विद्मो यदि ब्राह्मणाः स्मोऽब्राह्मणा वेति. Some arthavadas also come in conflict with the scriptures. Let us illustrate our point. Who knows what exists or does not exist in the next world. को ह वै तद्वेद यदमुष्मिँल्लोकेऽस्ति वा न वेति. Your Sastras instruct that heavenly bliss results from the performance of Jyotistoma sacrifice and so on. Is this result impossible in the next world? It contradicts your Shastras.

Let another instance of arthavada be cited. This sentence makes an assertion about the Garga Triratra-Brahmana. The face of a person, who knows this Brahmana, looks very beautiful : शोभतेऽस्य मुखं य एवं वेद. But nobody's face looks more beautiful if he knows the Brahmana. The truth of the arthavada in question is contradicted by perception.

There is also an arthavada which indicates the futility of some other Vedic rites. The text of the arthavada is as follows : One fulfils all his desires if he pours final libation into fire. He who performs the Pashu-bandha sacrifice conquers all the worlds. He who performs the horse sacrifice conquers death, get rid of all sins and of the sin which arises from the killing of a Brahmana. He who is acquainted with the text dealing with the horse-sacrifice gets all these benefits : पूर्णाहुत्या सर्वान् कामानवाप्नोति, पशुबन्धयाजी सर्वाँल्लोकानभिजयति, तरति मृत्युं तरति पाप्मानं तरति

ब्रह्महत्यां योऽश्वमेधेन यजते यश्चैवं वेद. If the pouring of final libation alone is sufficient to fulfil all the desires, if the conquest of all worlds is only possible through the performance of the Pashubandha sacrifice and if the knowledge of the text dealing with the horse-sacrifice confers on us the full benefit of the performance of the horse sacrifice, then what for are the instructions regarding the performance of the other Vedic rites? The Vedic rites which have been instructed in the Vedas should sink into insignificance, though one is to take a lot of cares and troubles to perform them since the same results are obtained by means of the other easier methods.

Let another example of arthavada be cited. Fire should be kindled neither on earth nor in the mid region nor in the sky : न पृथिव्यामग्निश्चेतव्यो नान्तरिक्षे न दिवि. The kindling of fire has been prohibited in a roundabout way. It is impossible to kindle fire either in the mid-region or in the sky. Is the denial of kindling fire in either places significant? The sentence which purports to prohibit the kindling of fire on earth should be taken as the universal prohibition of the kindling of fire since the kindling of fire is only possible on the earth.

Let another illustration of arthavada be quoted. The institutor of a sacrifice is a stone and the sacrificial post is the sun : यजमानः प्रस्तर आदित्यो यूपः How can we accept the truth of such a sentence? Sentences like this directly refer to such things as are contradicted by our perception. The performer of a Vedic rite cannot be a stone (the kusa grass) and the sacrificial post cannot be the sun. The performer of a sacrifice is a man but not a stone or grass. We learn this from our perception. The sacrificial post is a log of wood but not the sun. We gather this from perception. Therefore such sentences are not literally true. One cannot prove them to be so.

Now the defender of the truth of arthavadas may suggest that these arthavadas oblige us to do something. Such a suggestion is not logically sound since the acts which are indicated by the arthavada are not practicable. He (the lord of gods) wept. As he wept so he acquired the epithet 'Rudra' from the weeping. Now let us assume an act which may be indicated by this sentence. If we are to assume we should assume like this : So goes the story that Rudra wept. Other persons should also weep following his example. But we cannot entertain such a suggetion. Weeping means the shedding of tears arising from sorrow

due to the separation from dear and near ones. One cannot weep because the Shastras instruct him to do so. The lord of all creatures heated his own omentum (fat) and poured it into fire. So should other persons follow his example, heat their omentum and pour it into fire? Such an act is impracticable. Who can pour his own omentum into fire after having heated it? If this act is done after whose performance would a goat immediately go up to the sky? Gods were bewildered. Therefore others should also be bewildered. Such an instruction cannot be worked out. Nobody can create his own state of bewilderment at the instance of the Shastras. We cannot frame injunctions from these arthavadas. Therefore, the second alternative suggestion is not sound.

Now, a third alternative suggestion has been forwarded that the implied meanings of arthavadas are means to a principal act which has been expressed by a distinct injunction. The third suggestion is not also possible since it is not easily possible for something to be a means to an obligatory act. An Arthavada may act as an accessory to an injunction if it prescribes or to gods having bearing upon the main obligatory action. Let us cite an instance in order to clarify the point in question. There is an injunction, viz., "One should perform the Agnihotra sacrifice" : अग्निहोत्रं जुहोति. There are other injunctions, viz., "One should pour the libation of sour milk into fire" : दघ्ना जुहेति. "One should pour the libation of milk into fire" : पयसा जुहोति. etc. These injunctions are called 'viniyogas' as these enjoin the means to an obligatory action. The latter injunctions supply us with articles which are required for the performance of Agnihotra sacrifice. Thus these injunctions become subsidiary ones whereas the principal one is that which enjoins the Agnihotra sacrifice. There are other injunctions, viz., "One should offer offerings in the evening to the lord of all beings and to the god of fire : अग्नये च प्रजापतये च सायं जुहोति. These injunctions reveal the nature of gods to whom an offering is to be made. Thus they become subsidiary to the injunction which prescribes the Agnihotra sacrifice. This service cannot be rendered by arthavadas. The arthavadas in question do not prescribe minor acts which directly or indirectly feed the main act. The minor duties have been enjoined by these injunctions, viz., "One should pound vrihis" : ब्रीहीनवहन्ति. "One should sprinkle water on Vrihis" : ब्रीहीन् प्रोक्षति, etc. Thus we see that the arthavadas in question render no help to any injunction.

Now the defenders of the truth of arthavadas may contend that arthavadas are helpful to injunctions since they induce the intelligent persons to perform obligatory duties and encourage them. Such a contention is not tenable. Some goodselves hold that our implicit confidence in the eternalityof the Vedas encourages one to undertake an obligatory act prescribed by the Vedas. But the Naiyayikas assert that as a person has unflinching reverence for the author of the Vedas so he feels encouraged to take up a Vedic action but he feels no necessity of being induced for this purpose. If a person does not move to do on hearing the injunction that one who longs for such and such results should perform such and such acts then he will never budge an inch though temptations are held before him in order to induce him to take up the above actions. This is the shortcut criticism of the truth of arthavadas. The above three hypotheses fail to establish that the words which constitute the arthavadas have no self-consistence. Therefore as the arthavadas which constitute a portion of the Vedas, are contradicted so the whole of the Vedas is untrue.

Now the defenders of the truth of the Vedas may say that the portion of the Vedas which is contradicted by the other sources of valid knowledge may be admitted to be false. But why do you apprehend that the whole of the Vedas is untrue? The critics give a fit rejoinder and hold that as the arthavadas bear a resemblance to the other parts of the Vedas so we disbelieve the so-called truth of the other parts of the Vedas. According to the Mimamsakas the Vedas which do not contain arthavadas are not found out. Therefore, the Vedas, being intimately connected with arthavadas, are false. If it is clearly grasped that god is not truthful in some cases then how can it be firmly believed that he is truthful in other cases? Therefore, the net result is that the Vedas as a whole come under untrue knowledge : अप्रामाण्यं सर्वत्रेति.

The invalidity of Mantras

Mantras are now examined in detail. Do mantras assist injunctions by revealing their meaning? Or, do they render service to injunctions by their mere recital? If we consider the case of mantras from these two points of view, the validity of mantras remains the same. If this be the case then what is the use of such discussion? This system of logic does not undertake the task of interpreting the Vedas. But if

mantras do not convey any meaning, they cease to be the source of valid knowledge as no meaning is made out of them. In that case the truth of the Brahmana portion of the Vedas is not substantiated since it loses all its significance, being an ally of the mantras. If the above hypothesis is accepted then the Vedas become deprived of their utility of revealing rites. One may contend that a sentence which produces doubtful or erroneous knowledge is a source of untrue knowledge. Such a contention is not tenable since the sentence which conveys no sense is also a source of false knowledge.

Those who hold that mantras have no meaning defend their position in the following manner. They say when a Vedic rite is performed the meaning of all mantras which are recited at the time of its performance is not considered to be helpful since instructions have been given only to recite the mantras but not to remember their meaning. One recites the mantra "उरु प्रथस्व" and expands a sacrificial cake (पुरोडाश). If the mantra were helpful to the expansion of the said cake by conveying its meaning then why has the reciter of this mantra been instructed as an accessory to the expansion of the cake? If a person, having a pair of eyes, moves only when he is led by another person then it is clearly understood that he cannot see with his eyes. यथा साक्षः पुरुषः परेण चेन्नीयते नूनमक्षिभ्यां न पश्यतीति गम्यते. As in this case the statement that he cannot see is unnecessary so in the above case the recitation of mantra would not have been useless if its meaning is essential. A priest recites the mantra 'अग्नीदग्नीन्विहर' and carries fire from one place to another. The mantra requires no explanation. A mantra renders its assistance to a Vedic rite only by its recitation. Some service which it renders by its recitation is not seen. Still it is assumed. The order of words which is noticed in a sentence cannot be altered. So it is suggested that mantras should not convey their meanings where they are applied. When a person recites a mantra he does not change the order of words which constitute it. If a mantra renders its service by conveying its meaning then the maintenance of the order of the constituent words of a mantra will become futile since if we recite a mantra violating the order of the consituent words then there will be difficulty in understanding its meaning.

The mantras do not convey any meaning since it is seen that some mantras absolutely fail to convey their meanings. Let us illustrate a few such mantras. The first of them is this 'चत्वारि शृंगा त्रयो अस्य पादा द्वे

शीर्षे सप्त हस्तासो अस्य, त्रिधा बद्धो वृषभो रोरवीति महो देवो मर्त्यानाविवेश.' If this mantra is significant then an animal which has four horns, three feet, two heads and seven hands should be referred to by it. But there is no such animal in this world as is required for the sacrifice in question. Therefore, the mantra conveys no meaning. The second illustration also points to the conclusion that mantras convey no meaning since an inanimate object is commanded to behave like an animate object. The mantra runs thus : औषधे त्रायस्वैनम्. (Oh medicine protect this person).' But medicine does not understand that it has been employed to protect him. Another example is this :–'Hear, Oh slabs of stone!' (शृणोत ग्रावाणः). This meaning is absurd since unconscious slabs of stone are never employed to listen to something. Moreover, the Aditi mantra (अदितिर्द्यौरन्तरिक्षम्) (Aditi is the sky, she is the mid region)' and similar mantras are full of contradictions. How can Aditi who is the sky be the mid-region? There are some mantras the meanings of which are not at all intelligible. How can these mantras render some service to a rite by communicating their meanings? The mantras which convey no meaning are as under :

(1) अम्यक् सा त इन्द्र ऋष्टिः.

(2) शृण्येव जर्फरी तुर्फरीतु.

(3) इन्द्रःसोमस्य करकेति च.

Moreover, mantras do not purport to convey any meaning since they have one of the two ends to realise, viz., (1) to produce merits or (2) to convey a meaning. If words are not uttered, they cannot convey their meaning. Thus the recital of mantras, being obligatory, renders its assistance to the completion of a sacrifice. Therefore it should not be assumed that sole purpose of the recitation of a mantra is to convey its meaning.

The invalidity of the Vedas, as they name the rites

We now refer to a few Vedic sentences, viz., (1) उद्भिदा यजेत 'One should perform udbhid (that which comes into being) sacrifice', (2) चित्रया यजेत पशुकामः 'One who desires animals should perform Chitra-sacrifice', (3) अग्निहोत्रं जुहुयात्स्वर्गकामः 'One who longs for heaven should perform Agnihotra sacrifice', (4) श्येनेनाभिचरन्यजेत 'One who seeks to kill his enemy should perform Shyena sacrifice' and (5) वाजपेयेन स्वाराज्यकामो यजेत

'One who aspires after the celestial kingdom should perform Vajapeya sacrifice'. Do these sentences prescribe means by which sacrifices are to be performed? Do Udbhid, Chitra, Agnihotra, Shyena and Vajapeya constitute the means to an end, viz., sacrifice? Or are these terms proper names of a few sacrifices? What is the necessity of this scrutiny? If it is held that these terms serve both the purposes then the validity of the Vedic sentences will be called in question. For this reason a thorough examination into the character of these sentences is necessary. If you hold that these sentences prescribe means with words 'Udbhida' (that which comes into existence), etc. like the other sentences, viz., ब्रीहिभिर्यजेत 'One should perform a sacrifice with corns'; दध्ना जुहोति 'One should perform a sacrifice with the libation of sour-milk', etc. question arises do they inform us of a few specific articles by which sacrifices are to be performed? If this suggestion is accepted then there should be other Vedic sentences which will prescribe the very act of sacrifice–the end. If the act of sacrifice, i.e., the end, is not known then there is no scope for the prescription of means. The injunctions viz., (1) आग्नेयोऽष्टाकपालो भवति "the offering of sacrifice unto Fire should be made with eight pot-sherds" and अग्निहोत्रं जुहोति "One should perform Agnihotra sacrifice" are distinct ones which throw light on the act of sacrifice, i.e. the end. When the end is revealed to us the means are communicated to us by means of other subsidiary injunctions, viz., (1) 'One should perform the sacrifice with corns' and (2) 'One should perform the sacrifice with the libation of sour milk'.

Now, a question arises, viz., 'Why do you look out for different sentences as principal or subordinate injunctions?' Let us suggest that the single sentence 'One who aspires after heavenly kingdom should perform Vajapeya sacrifice' prescribes a sacrifice and at the same time demands that wine (वाजपेयेन) should constitute its means. Is this interpretation open to criticism? Yes, why is it not so? If you hold that the above sentence has two independent predicates then it cannot retain its unity. Then it should be split up into two independent sentences. One of them signifies that heavenly kingdom is to be attained by means of a sacrifice. The other one signifies that the sacrifice should be performed by means of wine (vajapeya). The sentence, once uttered, cannot communicate the two senses suggested by our opponents.

Now, the two sentences, suggested by our opponents, contain the same verb 'Yajeta'. As the verb remains identical so it is syntactically

connected with the two sentences. One who aspires after heavenly kingdom should perform a sacrifice and should do it by means of wine. In both sentences the verb remains the same. There will be no change in its character. Such a defence does not hold water. In these two sentences the verb which appears to be the same differs in essence. In the first sentence a sacrifice is enjoined because it is not at all known to us. In the second sentence a means to the sacrifice is prescribed because the sacrifice is already known to us since the prescription of a means is not at all possible if the act to be done is not known beforehand. The injunction which prescribes a means amounts to this that a sacrifice is to be done by such-and-such means. 'The sacrifice in question becomes the goal as it is known before. It is the substantive in the sentence. But in the sentence heavenly kingdom is attainable by a sacrifice. Heavenly kingdom is the goal. A sacrifice is a predicate. This predicate is not an accomplished fact. It is to be done. It occupies subordinate place in the sentence in question. Therefore, the sacrifice in question has contrary characters in the two sentences. The same verb cannot be syntactically connected with the two sentences. In that case it should be characterized by the irreconcilable contrary characters. He who aspires after heavenly kingdom should perfom a sacrifice. In this sentence the predicate 'should perform a sacrifice' has a distinct meaning. He who should perform a sacrifice should do it with wine. In this second sentence the predicate of the first sentence is no more a predicate. It is an adjunct of the subject. So it has a distinct character of its own. There is a gulf of difference fixed between these two characters.

If we hold that the injunction 'One should perform a particular sacrifice with wine' prescribed only a means then the act of performing a particular sacrifice must have been learnt from another source. Therefore, the very act of performing a particular sacrifice, being already known, is not an object of valid knowledge since novelty is the criterion of knowledge. Therefore, an injunction prescribing only a means is not true. In order to avoid this defect of the said injunction the hypothesis that the above injunction prescribes the act bearing the title 'Vajapeya' is resorted to. If our opponent argues in this manner then the injunctions 'Udbhida Yajeta', etc. become clearly superfluous. As soon as it is stated that one should perform a sacrifice it is learnt that this act bears the title 'Vajapeya'. (As the injunctions referred to do not contain the names of sacrifices so they involve repetition and

hence are superfluous). Now, as some sentences of the Vedas being superfluous, cease to be authentic so we do not continue our belief in the truthfulness of the other sentences of the Vedas.

The import of this topic is that the name of a sacrifice is not revealed by a Vedic injunction.

III

Sayana, the 14th century Bhashyakara of the Vedas, writes in his 'Introduction to the Rig Bhashya' about the atheists who were opposed to the very existence of the Vedas, the absolute authority on Hinduism, as the Bible is for Christianity and the Quran is for Islam.

He says that the Atheists declare : there is no such thing as Veda, that being so, how can there be a part of it known as the Rigveda? For what is this you call Veda? You cannot define : you cannot prove that as defined, it exists. And without such definition and proof nothing is established. Do not logicians assert that things are established by definition and proof of existence?

If you attempt to define what you mean by the Veda by saying that 'of the three kinds of evidence–perception, inference and revealed scripture, it is the last', that will not do; because it is too wide, including, as it would do, the smritis of Manu and of others. By universal consent revealed scripture is defined to be that which is an instrument of the right apprehension of things not evident to the senses. And such a definition applies to the Smritis also.

You propose to add–'provided it be not of human origin'; and think in that way to make your definition faultless. No. That is not acceptable. For, the Veda, too, made as it was by the man Parameshwara, (the Supreme Lord) is of human origin.

You will perhaps next say that by 'not of human origin', you mean 'not made by a corporeal living being'. But that too is not acceptable. Since from texts like 'The man has a thousand heads', (in the Purusha Sukta of the Rig Veda सहस्रशीर्षा पुरुषः RV 10-90-1), it is clear that this Lord, too, has a body.

You mean to say that ordinary man's body is the result of the acts of a previous life, but the author of the Vedas has no such body, and that is what you mean when you say that it is 'not of human origin'. Not

acceptable again. For the Vedas were produced by such living beings as Agni, Vayu, Aditya. Witness such texts : ऋग्वेद एवाग्नेरजायत यजुर्वेदो वायोः सामवेद आदित्यात् (ऐतरेय ब्राह्मण 5/32) i.e. The Rig Veda was born from Agni, the yajurveda from Vayu, the Sama Veda from Aditya. From which it must be recognised that man, the Lord, made the Veda at the instance of men such as Agni and others. And the Vedas are man-made.

Another definition you may suggest is that 'by Veda is meant a collection of sayings made up of mantras and brahmanas'. This will not do. For no one has as yet been able to say what is a mantra, and what is a brahmana. It is clear from this fact that there is neither adequate definition of the term Veda nor is there any proof of the existence of such a thing.

You would like perhaps to quote by way of such proof the text : ऋग्वेदं भगवोऽध्येमि यजुर्वेदं सामवेदमाथर्वणं चतुर्थम् (छान्दोग्य उप. 7/1/2) i.e. Lord, I study the Rigveda, the Yajurveda, the Samaveda and the fourth, the Atharvaveda.

But, all in vain. Because that very verse is in the Veda and you fall into the vice of putting forward a thing to support itself. That is to say, the statement of the Veda cannot prove the authenticity of the Veda. No man, however clever, can mount his own shoulder. So the quotation of the Veda is self-recommendation and you know that self-recommendation is no recommendation.

If you quote from Smriti : वेद एव द्विजातीनां निःश्रेयस्करः परः (याज्ञवल्क्य स्मृति 1/40) i.e. the Veda is the only means of happiness for the twice-born; that is not a proof of the kind we want. It must be rejected for the same reason, as being based upon the aforesaid text of the Veda.

The three kinds of evidence–perception, inference and scripture–are not to be so much as thought of here. You may refer to common notoriety i.e. you may say that people at large admit that there is Veda, so you should also accept that. To that we would say–No, that cannot be accepted, because the belief of people in the existence of the Veda is an illusion as their belief in the blueness of the sky is.

It is then clear that since the Veda is not capable of definition or proof, it cannot be admitted that there is such a thing.

If we admit for the sake of argument that the thing called Veda exists, still it is not worth commentary (Bhashyam). For it is of no authority, and therefore of no use.

The Veda is of no authority, why? Because you cannot show that the characteristic of evidence resides in it. Some[1] define evidence as the instrument of right knowledge. Others[2] say it is the means of acquiring knowledge not held before. Neither of these is found in the Veda.

You have said[3] that the Veda is composed of mantras and Brahmanas. But of the mantras some convey no sense at all. One such mantra is : अम्यक् सा त इन्द्र ऋष्टि : (ऋ.वे. 1-169-3); an other mantra is : यादृस्मिन् धायि तमपस्यया विदत् (ऋ.वे. 5-44-8); an other is : सृण्येव जर्भरी तुर्फरीतू (ऋ.वे. 10-106-6); yet see an other : आपान्तमन्युस्तृपलप्रभर्मा (ऋ. 10/89/5). These mantras yield no sense at all. But if there be no knowledge at all in these, right knowledge and the means to that, it is obvious, cannot be there.

Take this mantra : अधःस्विदासीदुपरिस्विदासीत् (ऋ. 10/129/5). This gives a sense, it is true. But it is the same kind of sense as that of such a sentence[4] is : that is either a man or a post. The meaning it yields is a doubt. How can that be authoritative?

Take again these mantras–

1. ओषधे त्रायस्वैनम् (तै.सं. 1/2/1/1) i.e. O grass, protect him.
2. स्वधिते मैनं हिंसी : (तै.सं. 1/2/1/1) i.e. O razor, do not kill him.
3. शृणोत ग्रावाणः (तै.सं. 1/3/13/1) i.e. O stones, listen to me.

Here you have in the Veda lifeless/senseless things like these–grass, razor and stone–addressed as if they were sentient beings. But this is as absurd as the saying[5] that there are two moons, and such sayings, therefore, cannot be authoritative.

Take these two mantras :

1. एक एव रुद्रो न द्वितीयोऽवतस्थे (तै.सं. 1/8/6/1) i.e. there is only one Rudra and no second has arisen.

2. सहस्राणि सहस्रशो ये रुद्रा अधि भूम्याम् (तै.सं. 4/5/11/1) i.e. there are thousands of Rudras on the earth.

Here you have a flat contradiction. It is as if a man were to tell

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1. *सम्यगनुभवसाधनं प्रमाणम्.*
2. *अनधिगतार्थगन्तृ प्रमाणम्.*
3. *मन्त्रब्राह्मणात्मको हि वेदः.*
4. *स्थाणुर्वा पुरुषो वा.*
5. *द्वौ चन्द्रमसौ*

you with his own mouth that he was dumb, and had been so from his birth–यावज्जीवमहं मौनी. Self-contradictory sayings of this kind cannot be authoritative.

Take the following mantras. आप उन्दन्तु (तै.सं. 1/2/1/1) This mantra tells how he for whom sacrifice is being made should have water poured over his head whilst it is being shaved. The other mantra–शुभिके शिर आरोह शोभयन्ती मुखं मम (आपस्तम्ब मंत्रपाठ 2/8/9)–tells us how at a marriage, for luck's sake, a covering of flowers should be put on the head of the bride and bridegroom.

Now the meaning conveyed by these mantras is a mere repetition of what is already a matter of common knowledge. Therefore, there is no conveying a meaning unknown before here. It is clear, therefore, that the mantra portion of the Veda is not authoritative.

Then Sayana quotes some sutras from the Poorva-Mimansa which assert that the mantras used in a Yajna are without any meaning.

तदर्थशास्त्रात् (पूर्वमीमांसा 1-2-31) i.e. the mantras are meaningless, because there is a shastra of identical meaning.

(By Shastra is meant a book called Brahmana). If the meaning which the mantra is naturally fitted to convey is the meaning of the Brahmana, the Brahmana may be said to be of identical meaning with the mantra. But the existence of such a Brahmana goes to show that the mantra is used without any reference to its meaning. For example, take this mantra–उरु प्रथस्व (तै.सं. 1/1/8). It refers to the spreading out of the purodasha (cake or chapati). But that very thing is referred to in the Brahmana–पुरोडाशं प्रथयति (तै. ब्राह्मण 3/2/8/4) i.e. spreads the chapati. That being so, if you say that the sense is got from the mantra, you as good as make out the Brahmana to be a useless thing : whereas, if you say, if you admit, that the mantra is used with no reference to its meaning, then the Brahmana becomes useful as teaching the sacrificial act referred to. Therefore, at the time of the sacrifice the only use of the mantras lies in the mere recitation of them, otherwise, they have no meaning.

When we say that the mantras are only for recitation at the time of sacrifice, then the Vedists say that recitation causes the Adrishta (the spiritual force that supposedly takes the sacrificer to heaven). That is not there. Secondly, you may say that even if the Brahmana repeats the

meaning (of the mantra); we must admit that mantras are meaningful, not meaningless. But that too is not the case.

वाक्यनियमात् (पू.मी. 1/2/32) i.e. because the words must be recited in a particular order.

The rule is that if the mantra is–अग्निर्मूर्द्धा दिवः ककुत् (ऋ. 8-44-16), then the words will be pronounced in this order only. You cannot pronounce it–ककुत् दिवः मूर्द्धा अ ग्नः–in a reverse order; but if we pronounce in the reverse order the meaning of the mantra remains the same. It is clear the only use of the mantras lies in their being recited in such a way as to secure the full fruit of the fixed order of the text. So they are devoid of meaning.

It may be said by the Vedists that side by side with the spiritual benefit obtained by reciting the mantras in the order of the text, the recitation serves also the purpose of conveying a meaning. To counter such an argument, the next sutra says : बुद्धशास्त्रात् (पू.मी. 1-2-33) i.e. the command is already known.

अग्नीदग्नीन् विहर (तै.सं. 6/3/1/2) is a directory text (प्रैषमंत्र), which is recited at the time of sacrifice (Yajna). Now the duty of distributing the fire or the like, has already been learnt as part of his work by the priest called Agnidhra when engaged in study. It is a useless proceeding to instruct him by a mantra with regard to a thing which he has already learnt. If your foot has a shoe on, you do not clap another on the top of it.[1] So the mantras are meaningless.

The Vedist may say that the mantra may be a useful reminder for the avoidance of a careless forgetfulness. To guard against this the next sutra says : अविद्यमानवचनात् (पू.मी. 1/2/34) i.e. since the mantra mentions things that have no existence, (so they are without meaning).

There is a text in the Veda–चत्वारि शृंगा त्रयो अस्य पादा द्वे शीर्षे सप्त हस्तासो अस्य (ऋ. 4-58-3) i.e. 'He has four horns, three feet, two heads, seven hands.'

Now there is no implement of the sacrifice in any way corresponding to this description, which the mantra might be supposed to put the priest in remembrance of.

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1. *न हि सोपानत्के पादे पुनरपि उपानहं प्रतिमुञ्चति.*

The Vedist may say that some immanent deity is referred to here. To guard against this, the next sutra say : अचेतनेऽर्थवन्धनात् (पू.मी. 1-2-35), i.e. since the manta attaches a meaning to a senseless thing, so the mantras are meaningless.

There are such mantra as : ओषधे त्रायस्वैनम् (तै.सं. 1-2-1-1), i.e. oh grass, protect him; शृणोत ग्रावाणः (तै.सं. 1-3-13-1), oh stones, listen to me. Here the words of the mantras, attach to senseless things a meaning, such as, protecting or hearing, which befits only sentient beings. And this is improper.

It may be said, however, that in accordance with the doctrine laid down in the Abhimanivyapadesha Sutra (अभिमानिव्यपदेश सूत्र) of the Vaiyasika Shastra, the real subject of such clauses is some immanent deity. So the mantras have meaning. To guard against this, the next sutra says : अर्थविप्रतिषेधात् (पू.मी. 1-2-36), i.e. Since the meanings are mutually contradictory, so the mantras are meaningless.

There is a text : अदितिर्द्यौरदितिरन्तरिक्षम् (ऋ. 1-89-10) i.e. 'Aditi is Dyaus. Aditi is Antariksha.' But to say that 'what is Dyaus, is Antariksha', is a contradiction in terms. There are other texts also that can be cited here as 'एक एव रुद्रः' (तै.सं. 1-8-6-1) i.e. 'Rudra is only one' and सहस्राणि सहस्रशो ये रुद्राः (तै.सं. 4-5-11-1) i.e. 'The Rudras are in their thousands'.

The Vedists may say that in such a text Aditi is praised metaphorically under the form of Antariksha, as when we say of some one that he is our father and mother.[1] And that Rudra, though one in himself, takes on many forms by his supernatural power. To guard against this, the next sutra says : स्वाध्यायवदवचनात् (यू.मी. 1-2-37) i.e. because the mantras at the time of sacrifice express no meaning, any more than they do when one is learning them by heart.

Suppose that a certain woman, called Poornika, is plying the pestle. Near her a Brahmana boy, engaged in learning his daily, task, chances to be reciting the pestle mantra (अवघात मंत्र). He has no wish to convey the meaning of the mantra. This is evident from the fact that he does not make his mantra keep time with the fall of the pestle. He is only learning the words by heart, and in doing that repeats over and over again this among other mantras. And just as in such a case the pestle mantra is at

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1. *त्वमेव माता च पिता त्वमेव.*

lesson time recited without conveying its meaning to Poornika, so at the sacrifice it will not convey its meaning.

The Vedist may say that in the case here supposed, the boy has no wish to convey the meaning, while Poornika on her side is incapable of understanding it. But it is different in the sacrifice. There the priest called Adhvaryu, does wish to convey the meaning, and can understand it. To guard against this, the next sutra says : अविज्ञेयात् (पू.मी. 1-2-38), i.e. because some mantras are unintelligible, so the mantras are meaningless.

There are some mantras, the meanings of those cannot be made out. Take for example these mantras : अम्यक् सा त इन्द्र ऋषिरस्मे (ऋ. 1-169-3); सृण्येव जर्भरी तुर्फरीतू (ऋ. 10-106-6)

The Vedist may say that parallel Vedic passages, the *Nirukta* and grammar are there to throw light on such mantras. To guard against this, the next mantra says : अनित्यसंयोगान् मन्त्रानर्थक्यम् (पू.मी. 1-2-39) i.e. because they have to do with non-eternal things, so they are devoid of any meaning.

In the text 'किं ते कृण्वन्ति कीकटेषु' (ऋ. 3-53-14) i.e. 'what do they do in Kikata (name of a country)?' mention is made of a country called Kikata, as also of a city called Naichashakham (नैचाशाखम्), and a king Pramaganda (प्रमगन्द); from which we can infer that this text at least did not exist before king Pramaganda.

From all these reasons it must be concluded that at the sacrifice the mantras have no use as conveying a meaning. Their use lies in their recitation only.

The Vedists say that not only mantras, but also their Brahmanas (व्याख्यान, explanations) are Veda. They atheists attack this portion as well separately. We shall see in the following paragraphs as to how they refute the assertions of the Vedists.

Even if we admit the authority of the mantra portion of the Veda, the Brahmana portion cannot rightly be said to be called authoritative, for the following reasons. The Brahmana portion is of two kinds–

1. Vidhi, 2. Arthavada. Says Apastamba–कर्मचोदना ब्राह्मणानि, ब्राह्मणशेषोऽर्थवादः (आप.परि. 34-35) i.e. some Brahmanas relate to work (कर्म), that is, are Vidhis (precepts), and all the remaining Brahmanas are of the nature of arthavada.

Vidhis, too, are of two kinds, according as they enjoin the performance of something that has not been performed (अप्रवृत्तप्रवर्त्तनम्) or make known something that is not known (अज्ञातार्थज्ञापनम्). Such vidhis as, for example, 'आग्नावैष्णवं पुरोडाशं निर्वपन्ति दीक्षणीयम् (ऐ.ब्रा. 1/1) i.e. one should offer cake in the Deekshiya ishti (sacrifice) to god Agni-Vishnu; which fall under the karma section of the Veda, enjoin the performance of something that has not been performed; while such Vidhis as, for example, आत्मा वा इदमेक एवाग्र आसीत् (ऐ. आरण्यक, 2/4/1) i.e. only Atma was there before, which fall under the Brahma section of the Veda, reveal something which was not previously known. Now of these two kinds there can, in the first place, be no authoritativeness about such vidhis, belonging to the karma section of the Veda, as, for example, जर्त्तिलयवाग्वा वा जुहुयाद् गवीधुकयवाग्वा वा (तै.सं. 5-4-3-2), i.e. one should offer oblation of gruel of wild sesame seeds or of wild wheats. For these vidhis enjoin the use of substances which are not suitable for use; and they cannot therefore be said to be instruments of right knowledge. That the substances in question are not suitable for use is revealed in the rest of the sentence, अनाहुतिर्वै जर्त्तिलाश्च गवीधुकाश्च (तै.सं. 5-4-3-2) i.e. wild sesame seeds or wild wheats are unfit for oblation. For there the employment in the sacrifice of wheat and sesame seeds grown in the forest is expressly forbidden.

Therefore, a vidhi which enjoins the use of such substances cannot possibly be authoritative. In the same way, in the Aitareya, Taittiriya and other Brahmanas many vidhis are expressly controverted, with such words as, तत्तन्नादृत्यम् (ऐ.ब्रा. 2/23) i.e. This and this is not to be regarded.' or तत्तथा न कार्यम् (तै.ब्रा. 1-1-8-6), i.e. 'This is not to be done in that way.'

Again, in the Aitareya Brahmana the practice of performing the Homa sacrifice before the sun has risen is repeatedly censured, and it is again and again solemnly declared that this sacrifice must be offered after the sun has risen–तस्मादुदिते होतव्यम् (ऐ.ब्रा. 5/31). But the Taittiriyas have the text, which says : यदनुदिते सूर्ये प्रातर्जुहुयात् उभयमेवाग्नेयं स्यात्, उदिते सूर्ये प्रातर्जुहोति (तै.ब्रा. 2-1-2-7) i.e. if Homa is done before the sun has risen, then the Homa done in the morning and in the evening would go to god Agni and god Surya would not get anything. So one should do Homa after the sun has risen.

But the same school has a text in which the objection to a Homa sacrifice offered after the sun has risen is thus set out–य दुदिते सूर्ये

प्रातर्जुहुयाद् यथा अतिथये प्रद्रुताय शून्यायावसथायाहार्यं हरन्ति तादृगेव तत् (तै.ब्रा. 2-1-2-12) i.e. to do Homa after the sun has risen is like to honour a guest room with food when the guest has gone–instead of honouring the guest when he was present at home.

In the same way, the vidhi, अतिरात्रे षोडशिनं गृह्णाति i.e. he takes the pot called shodashi in the Atiratra sacrifice, is contradicted by the vidhi 'नातिरात्रे षोडशिनं गृह्णाति' i.e. he does not take pot called shodashi in the Atiratra sacrifice.

Moreover, heaven and the like, are said to be the reward of the Jyotishtoma and other sacrifices. But nobody gets heaven immediately after performing a sacrifice, as one gets immediately satisfied after taking food.[1]

For all these reasons you will find it difficult to prove that the Vidhi portion of the Veda is authoritative.

And as for the other kind of vidhis, which reveal what was not already known, and belong to the Brahma portion of the Vedas, they contradict each other and cannot, therefore, be authoritative. The Aitareyins have a text which says : आत्मा वा इदमेक एवाग्र आसीत् (ऐ.उप. 1/1) i.e. in the beginning there was only Atma.

The Taittiriyas have other text which says : असद् वा इदमग्र आसीत् (तै.आ. 8/7) i.e. in the beginning there was nothing.

It goes without saying that the two vidhis are contradictory. From all this it is clear that the whole vidhi portion of the Vedas is unauthoritative.

As far as the arthavada portion is concerned, that too, is not authoritative, as the sutra says : आम्नायस्य क्रियार्थत्वादानर्थक्यमतदर्थानां तस्मादनित्यमुच्यते (पू.मी. 1-2-1) i.e. since the Veda has the sacrifice for its object, everything not relating to the sacrifice is meaningless and is called 'Anitya'.

The object of the whole body of Veda is the performance of sacrifice. So it must follow that these Arthavadas, which have nothing to do with the performance of sacrifice, have no meaning at all of their own which they may desire to convey. What is meant by Arthavadas, will be clear from the following examples :

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1. *न हि भोजनानन्तरं तृप्तेरनुपलम्भोऽस्ति*

1. सोऽरोदीत् यदरोदीत् तद्रुद्रस्य रुद्रत्वम् (तै.सं. 1-5-1-1) i.e. Rudra wept. That he wept, that is his Rudrahood.

2. स आत्मनो वपामुदखिदत् (तै.सं. 2-1-1-4) i.e. he uprooted his fat.

3. देवा वै देवयजनमध्यवसाय दिशो न प्राजानन् (तै.सं. 6-1-5-1) i.e. The gods after performing the Deva-Yajana, did not know the directions.

Since in such sentences there is no meaning intended to be conveyed they are rightly called Anitya. When they are called anitya, what is meant is that in common with poetry and ordinary talk they want the character of compulsory duty and are therefore not authoritative.

It may be said that the Arthavadas just cited have indeed no authority in regard of any religious duty to be done, but they are, however, authoritative as regards their own meaning. Since they convey their meaning, so you cannot deny their authoritativeness. Anticipating such an objection, the next *sutra* infers the non-authoritativeness of all Arthavadas from the examples of some which are clearly opposed to other good authorities. The sutra says : शास्त्रदृष्टविरोधाच्च (पू.मी. 1-2-2) i.e. because they contradict both the Shastras and the evidence of our senses.

Three kinds of contradictions are found in Arthavada–contradiction of a Shastra (शास्त्रविरोध), contradiction of what we see with our eyes (दृष्टविरोध) and contradiction of what we see in a Shastra (शास्त्रदृष्टविरोध). For example the Arthavada 'स्तेनं मनोऽनृतवादिनी वाक्' (mind is thief and voice tells a lie) tells us of the theft on the part of the mind and lying on the part of the voice. But both are contrary to the Shastra, which says चौर्यं न कर्तव्यम् (one should not steal) & नानृतं वदेत् (do not tell a lie). Again, the Arthavada 'तस्माद् धूम एवाग्नेर्दिवा ददृशे नार्चिः तस्माद् अर्चिरेवाग्नेर्नक्तं ददृशे न धूमः (तै.ब्रा. 2-1-2) i.e. only the smoke, not the flame of fire (Agni) is seen in the day, in the night only the flames of Agni are seen, not the smoke, is opposed to what we see with our eyes.

As is also that other Arthavada,–न चैतद् विद्मो वयं ब्राह्मणा वा स्मोऽब्राह्मणा वा. (मै.सं. 1-4-11) i.e. we do not know whether we are Brahmanas or non-Brahmanas.

Lastly the Arthavada को हि तद् वेद यद्यमुष्मिन् लोकेऽस्ति वा न वा (तै.सं. 6-1-1-1) i.e. who knows if there is something in the hereafter or not, is opposed to what we see in your shastras. Your shastras say स्वर्गकामो

यजेत i.e. he who wants to go to heaven, he should perform sacrifice. In your shastra mention is made of a reward in the hereafter.

Because of such contradictions, Arthavadas are unauthoritative. It may be said that though Arthavadas like 'Rudra wept' and others like 'mind is thief) are unauthoritative–the one kind because they are useless, and the other kind because they are opposed to other good authorities, yet the Arthavadas which result in some good, differ from these two kinds, and are authoritative. To counter this, the next sutra says : तथा फलाभावात् (पू.मी. 1-2-3) i.e. They are unauthoritative because Arthavadas do not result in any advantage.

We have seen that what is said in Arthavada is inconsistent with other good authorities. In the same way the rewards they promise do not exist. For example, there is Arthavada with regard to Garga-tri-ratra (गर्गत्रिरात्र) sacrifice–शोभतेऽस्य मुखं य एवं वेद (ताण्ड्य ब्रा. 20-16-6) i.e. he who knows thus, his face shines/becomes beautiful.

With regard to the study of the Veda at the new moon (दर्श) and full moon (पूर्णमास) sacrifices, there is this other Arthavad–आस्य प्रजायां वाजी जायते य एवं वेद (तै.सं. 1-7-4-6) i.e. His children/grand children become rich with grains he who knows this. But we do not see students of the Veda in possession of any such rewards though they know all that when they study the text.

The so-called 'knowers' have no shining faces and the children of the 'knowers' are in very bad situation–they find it hard even to lead a hand-to-mouth life, even to make both ends meet. So what is authoritative in these Arthavadas? All falsehood.

The Vedists may say : Granted that Arthavadas which promise rewards in this world are unauthoritative, because they are opposed to common experience. But those Arthavadas which promise rewards in heaven may notwithstanding be authoritative. Refuting this assertion, the next sutra says : अन्यानर्थक्यात् (पू.मी. 1-2-4) i.e. And because all subsequent sacrifices would be useless.

There are these Arthavadas :

पूर्णाहुत्या सर्वान्कामानवाप्नोति (तै.ब्रा. 3-8-10-5)
i.e. with the help of Poornahuti he gets all that he desires.

पशुबन्धयाजी सर्वान् लोकानभिजयति

i.e. he who performs Pashubandha sacrifice (i.e. a sacrifice in which animals are sacrificed) he gets all the worlds.

तरति मृत्युं तरति पाप्मानं तरति ब्रह्महत्यां योऽश्वमेधेन यजते य उ चैनमेवं वेद (तै.सं. 5-3-12-2)

i.e. he who performs the Ashwamedha (horse sacrifice) yajna, crosses death, crosses sin and crosses Brahmahatya (murder of a Brahmana).

Now if the Poornahuti, which is part of the Agnyadheya rite, ensures the fulfilment of all desires, the other later sacrifices, the Agnihotra and the rest, can serve no purpose. In the same way, if the Niroodhapashubanda (निरूढ़-पशुबन्ध-यज्ञ) sacrifice gains for the worshipper all the worlds, then the Jyotishtoma and other sacrifices are useless. And if the mere knowledge of the Ashwamedha sacrifice acquired at the time of study delivers the man/soul from the guilt of slaying a Brahmana, what is the use of performing that sacrifice?

Therefore, it is clear that these Arthavadas also, which promise rewards in heaven are of no authority.

(If the sacrifices could do what is boasted about them, then why were the Brahmanas poor and beggers? Why did this country get subjugated for thousands of years? Why was life miserable here? Why do people run away from India to America and Canada for prosperity and good life? Why could not these sacrifices create heaven on the Indian soil? It seems all falsehood was preached only to entrap wealthy people who were made to perform such sacrifices and thus the priests were having their livelihood. We find a statement in Aitareya Brahmana, to the effect that as Nishads, thieves and sinners throw a wealthy man in the forest in a deep hole and decamp with his money, so the priests throw the Yajamana in a deep hole and decamp with his belongings : यथा ह वा इदं निषादा वा सेलगा वा पापकृतो वा वित्तवन्तं पुरुषमरण्ये गृहीत्वा कर्तमन्वस्य वित्तमादाय द्रवन्ति, एवमेव त ऋत्विजो यजमानं कर्तमन्वस्य वित्तमादाय द्रवन्ति. (ऐतरेय ब्रा. 8/11))

This, however, may be said : Granted that the Arthavadas which speak of rewards are of no authority; still those which convey prohibitions involve no absurdity and may be accepted as authoritative. To this refutes the next sutra which says : अभागिप्रतिषेधात् (पू.मी. 1/2/5) i.e. because the prohibitions contained in Arthavadas are out of place.

In the Arthavad न पृथिव्यामग्निश्चेतव्यो नान्तरिक्षे न दिवि (तै.सं. 5-2-7-1) i.e. 'one should not raise an altar for the sacrificial fire in the earth, in mid-heaven or in the sky.' For the act forbidden to be done there, the raising an altar for sacrificial fire, could not in any case be done in either of these two places i.e. mid-heaven and the sky.

(Prohibition is foolish as not a tomfool can think of doing what is prohibited here because that is impossible to do. To prohibit an impossibility is tomfoolery of the first water).

The Vedist may say : Granted that these prohibitive Arthavadas are non-authoritative. But no such absurdity is inherent in the Arthavadas which tell the deeds of men of old time, as for example, बबरः प्रावाहणिरकामयत (तै.सं. 7-1-10-2). Refuting this, the next sutra says : अनित्यसंयोगात् (पू.मी. 1-2-6) i.e. because of the mention made in them of non-eternal things.

In this Arthavada mention is made of one Babara and other non-eternal things. The Arthavada cannot therefore have existed before Babar. Therefore it must be credited with a human origin. That demolishes the palace of revelation of the Vedas!

In every way it is clear that the Arthavadas are of no authority. The Vedas, on account of its human authorship are unauthoritative like the speech of one who utters fallacy. The next sutra says the same thing : वेदांश्चैके सन्निकर्षं पुरुषाख्या (पू.मी. 1-1-27) i.e. Of the Vedas, too, some predicate nearness to us in time. There is mention of the men who composed them.

The word 'too' in the sutra links the Vedas to books like the Raghuvamsha of Kalidasa and the like; for they are in this sentence brought together with the Vedas by way of comparison. As books like the Raghuvamsha belong to our own time, so, too, the Vedas. They are not without beginning. That is why we find men mentioned as the authors of them. In the familiar designations of these books–the Vaiyasika Bharata, the Valmiki Ramayana and the like–Vyas and other writers are clearly indicated as the authors of these books. Just so it is with the titles of the Vedas : the Kathaka (काठक) samhita, the Kauthuma (कौथुम) Samhita and the Taittiriya (तैत्तिरीय) samhita. These titles indicate Kath (कठ) and others as the authors of various shakhas (Samhitas) of the Vedas, and the Vedas are, therefore, of human origin.

Bethinking that it may be said that the Vedas are eternal and that these titles merely mean that Katha and others like teachers were busy

in handing down the traditional knowledge of the Vedas, the next sutra says : अनित्यदर्शनाच्च (पू.मी. 1-1-28) i.e. also because we see mention made of things that are not eternal.

People like Babara, who were not eternal, but were born and have died, are spoken of in the Veda : बबरः प्रावाहणिरकामयत (तै.सं. 7-1-10-2) i.e. Babara son of Pravaahana desired. कुसुरुविन्द औद्दालकिरकामयत (तै.सं. 7-2-2-1) Kusurubinda son of Uddalika desired.

That being so, the Vedas, which cannot be placed prior to Babara and others mentioned in them, are not without beginning. The word 'also' in the sutra links this argument to such other arguments as, for example, that the Vedas in dispute being a collection of sentences like those which go to make up a poem, say of Kalidasa's, must be of human origin.

We find in the Vedas texts like these : वनस्पतयः सत्रमासत i.e. the trees sat down at the sacrifice; सर्पाः सत्रमासत i.e. the serpents sat down at the sacrifice. Trees are senseless things and serpents, though they have sense, are destitute of knowledge. That either one or the other should take part in a sacrifice is impossible. Therefore the Veda in such cases resembles such idle talk of a mad man or a child[1], as, for example this :

जरद्गवः कम्बलपादुकाभ्यां द्वारि स्थितो गायति मद्रकाणि,
तं ब्राह्मणी पृच्छति पुत्रकामा राजन् रुमायां लशुनस्य कोऽर्थः.

i.e. an old ox wearing blanket and shoes is standing at the door and is singing song for welfare. A Brahmana woman, desirous of a son, asks : O king what is the rate of garlic in the mine of salt?

IV

Swami Dayananda Saraswati, founder of Arya-samaj, writes in the 2nd chapter of his Rigvedaadi bhashya bhoomika (ऋग्वेदादिभाष्यभूमिका) that the Vedas are god-made. To substantiate his claim he refers to the two mantras of the Vedas : Yajurveda 31/7 and Atharvaveda 10-23-4-20.

तस्माद् यज्ञात्सर्वहुत ऋचः सामानि जज्ञिरे,
छन्दांसि जज्ञिरे तस्माद्यजुस्तस्मादजायत. यजु. 31/7

यस्मादृचो अपातक्षन् यजुर्यस्मादपाकषन्,
सामानि यस्य लोमान्यथर्वांगिरसो मुखम्. अथर्व. 10-23-4-20

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1. *उन्मत्तबालवाक्यसदृशत्वात्, सायण, ऋग्वेदभाष्यभूमिका.*

In these verses it is said that the Rigveda, the Samaveda, the Yajurveda and the Atharvaveda were produced by the Supreme and Perfect Being or Sarvahuta Yajna.

Firstly, this self-recommendary evidence cannot be taken at its face value because the contents of the Vedas tell a different story. The Yajurveda says : इति शुश्रुम धीराणां ये नस्तद्विचचक्षिरे. (Yv 40/10) In simple language it means : Thus have we heard from the sages who have declared this lore to us.

It means the composer of this verse says that the lore that he is telling you here, has been heared by him from the sages. Can god say so? Is not the composer an ordinary poet?

Followers of Swamiji may say that the translation is not correct. So for their satisfaction I quote the Bhashya of Swamiji : (god says) O men, as we listen to what the intelligent, Yogis and scholars say and what they explain to us, you also listen to that.[1]

Here god, the speaker or composer of the verse says : as I listen to what yogis and scholars say and explain, you also listen to that. How can god be the writer of such-like verses? Clearly such-like verses are man-made and god cannot be the author of such books as contain these verses.

Swamiji says that the Vedas were given to mankind at the time of creation. But the contents of the Vedas say that it is not the case.

The second mantra of the first sukta of the Rig Veda says :

अग्निः पूर्वेभिर्ऋषिभिरीड्यो नूतनैरुत. (RV 1-1-2)

i.e. Agni is to be celebrated by both ancient and modern sages.

It means, when this verse was being composed, by that time there were Rishis who were referred to as ancient. That means, when this verse was composed, it was not the very beginning of the world. By that time human society had evolved and many generations of rishis had gone and the former rishis were referred to as ancient rishis. That being so, how can it be accepted that the Vedas were given to mankind at the very beginning of the world?

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1. *हे मनुष्यो, जैसे हम लोग मेधावि योगी विद्वानों से जो वचन सुनते हैं, जो वे लोग हमारे प्रति व्याख्यानपूर्वक कहते हैं, ...इस बात को तुम भी सुनो. स्वामी दयानंद सरस्वती, यजुर्वेद भाषाभाष्य, पृ. 1173*

Swamiji writes in his Sanskrit Bhashya[1]–पूर्वेभिः अधीतविद्यैर्वर्तमानैः प्राक्तनैर्वा विद्वद्भिः i.e. पूर्वेभिः means by those who are learning at present and who have learnt at a previous time. Here two times are referred to : learning at present and have learnt at previous time. This means when this 2nd verse of the Rigveda was being composed that was not the very beginning of the world–before that there was a 'previous' time when the rishis or scholars had existed who had celebrated the Agni or God as Swamiji insists to call it.

In his भाषाभाष्य i.e. Hindi commentary, Swamiji says–यह जो (अग्निः) परमेश्वर (पूर्वेभिः) वर्त्तमान वा पहिले समय के विद्वान (....) से स्तुति करने योग्य है.[2]

This Agni (god) is praisable by scholars of present and of the past. From this it is clear that the Vedas were neither god-made nor they were born at the time of creation or the beginning of the world as they refer to a previous time. Eternal Vedas cannot refer to the previous or the past time because eternal means : always existing, existing at all times, existing through all time.

If god were the creator of the world and of the Vedas, he would not have said in the Vedas supposedly prepared by him in this way :

को अद्धा वेद क इह प्र वोचत्कुत आजाता इयं विसृष्टिः,
अर्वाग्देवा अस्य विसर्जनेनाथा को वेद यत आबभूव. ऋग्वेद 10/129/6

Who really knows? Who in this world may declare it! Whence was this creation, whence was it engendered? The gods were subsequent to the world's creation; so who knows whence it arose?

What does this verse declare? It declares that the author does not know how the world came into being, who created it and there is nobody who can tell all this in certain terms.

This verses also tells that god is neither the author of the Vedas nor the creator of the world.

Swamiji has referred to this full sukta No. 129 of the Rigveda in his 'Bhoomika' but did not explain the matras from 2 to 6. He says there that he would explain those mantras in the Bhashya[3] but the Bhashya of these mantras he could not do because he died before completing the Rigvedabhashya.

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1. *स्वामी दयानंद सरस्वती, ऋग्वेदभाष्यम् (सं) युधिष्ठिर मीमांसक, पृ. 446*
2. *वही, पृ. 448*
3. *इनकी व्याख्या भी यहां नहीं करते, वेदभाष्य में करेंगे. (2-6), ऋग्वेदादिभाष्यभूमिका, पृ. 144*

God cannot use vocative case for himself–he cannot say oh god, etc. But in the Vedas we see that god addresses in this way–oh god :

श्रीश्च ते लश्मीश्च पत्न्यौ. यजु. 31/22.[1]

Commenting on this verse Swamiji writes–हे परमेश्वर, जो आपकी अनन्त शोभारूप श्री और जो अनंत शुभलक्षणयुक्त लक्ष्मी है, वे दोनों स्त्री के समान हैं अर्थात जैसे स्त्री पति की सेवा करती है, इसी प्रकार आपकी सेवा आप ही को प्राप्त होती है.

O God! All shri (beauty) and all Lakshmi (splendid wealth) & c., serve Thee as the wives serve their husbands.[2]

God is not a fool that he would address himself as 'Oh god'. Or he would need someone else to know about his two wives! How can a book be supposedly written by god in which he is addressed by himself? Obviously it is written by a devotee who believed in polygamy, that is why he attributed two wives to his god.

In an other verse god says let us worship god. There is a verse which runs thus : हिरण्यगर्भः समवर्त्तताग्रे. (ऋ. 8-7-3-1). In the commentary of this verse swamiji writes : "तस्मै सुखस्वरूपाय देवाय हविषा विधेमेति. उसी सुखस्वरूप परमेश्वर देव की ही हम लोग उपासना करे.[3]

We offer praise unto his blissful and shining majesty.[4]

Is it god who is saying all this? If god is one, then who are others referred to as “हम लोग” or "we". Obviously, this verse cannot be said by god. Only a devotee can say so.

In another verse a man is saluted. Why will god salute a man? Man salutes him, not he. But the verse says नमो रुचाय ब्राह्मये (यजु. 31/20)

Swamiji writes in his commentary–ब्रह्म को पिता के समान मानके, सत्य भाव से प्रेम प्रीति करके, सेवा करने वाला जो विद्वान मनुष्य है, उसको भी हम लोग नमस्कार करते हैं.[5]

Our salutations are due to His servants who having acquired his knowledge from the learned, love Him with the love.[6]

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1. *ऋग्वेदादिभाष्यभूमिका, पृ. 162-63.*
2. *Ghasi Ram, Introduction to the Commentary on the Vedas, p. 193.*
3. *ऋग्वेदादिभाष्यभूमिका, पृ. 144*
4. *Ghasi Ram. op.cit., p. 173*
5. *ऋग्वेदादि. पृ. 161*
6. *Ghasi Ram, op. cit., p. 193*

This verse cannot be god-made because he is not expected to salute a man.

God is said to be omniscient, so he knows everything in its correct form. He cannot say that the sun walks, but according to Swamiji, he does say so. In the Bhashya of Yajurveda while commenting on the verse आ कृष्णेन रजसा वर्त्तमानो. यजुर्वेद 33/43. he writes : अपने भ्रमण की आवृत्ति करता हुआ, सब लोकों को दिखाता हुआ, प्रकाशमान सूर्य्यदेव प्राणीमात्र को अपने अपने प्रदेश में स्थापित करता हुआ, उदयास्त समय में आता जाता है. सो ईश्वर का बनाया सूर्य्यलोक है.

All school-going children know that it is the rotation of the earth that causes day or night. The sun neither goes anywhere nor comes from anywhere.

We know that Theia, the Mars-sized body, collided with Earth, throwing vaporized chunks of the young planet's crust into space. Gravity bound the ejected particles together, creating a moon, that is the largest in the solar system in relation to its host planet.

In this way a piece of the earth became moon some 4.53 billion years ago. There are 170 moons in our solar system, not one. But the Vedas know only of one moon. How it came into being the veda says : चन्द्रमा मनसो जातः, ऋग्वेद 8-7-3-12—writés. Swamiji–तस्यास्य पुरुषस्य मनसो मननशीलात्सामर्थ्याच्चन्द्रमा जात उत्पन्नोऽस्ति. उस पुरुष के मनन अर्थात ज्ञानस्वरूप सामर्थ्य से चन्द्रमा उत्पन्न हुआ है.[1]

The moon was produced from the mind, i.e. the reflective element of the samarthya of this Purusha.[2]

God cannot name a river that is not eternal. But he does so. He refers to Saraswati river that went out of existence c. 1500 BCE. Commenting on the mantra काय स्वाहा कस्मै. यजुर्वेद 22/20, Swamiji writes :

अच्छा सुख करने हारी माता के लिए सत्यक्रिया (सरस्वत्यै) नदी के लिए सत्यक्रिया.[3]

Why would god say so only for one river–Saraswati? This verse cannot be god-made. We know that the people who lived on the banks of Saraswati composed verses, the anthologies of which are today called the Vedas. They referred to their main source of water and were thankful to it. God has nothing to do with this particular river. Why god, said to be eternal, would refer to a mortal river?

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1. *ऋग्वेदादि. पृ. 153-154*
2. *Ghasi Ram, op.cit., p. 184*
3. *स्वामीदयानंद सरस्वती, यजुर्वेदभाषाभाष्य, पृ. 801*

Likewise, according to Swamiji, god also refers to telegraph. There is a verse in the Rigveda : युवं पेदवे पुरुवारमश्विना स्पृधां श्वेतं तरुतारं दुवस्यथः (ऋ. 1-8-21-5)

Writes Swamiji in his comment : सम्यक् साधयित्वा तत्ताराख्यं यन्त्रं नित्यं सेवध्वमिति बोध्यम्. जो इस प्रकार का ताराख्य यंत्र है, उसको सिद्ध करके, प्रीति से सेवन करो.

You should make the telegraph apparatus.... always make use of the telegraph apparatus.[1]

Telegraph was started in 1832 by Pavel Schilling when Swamiji was only a lad of eight years and this system became out of date owing to SMS, e-mail, and other modern means of communication. So on 15 July, 2013 this means of communication–telegraph–was dismantled all over the world including India. What was the necessity for god to refer to such an unimportant device?

It seems Swamiji did not know about the origin of Telegraph. He thought that, that was in vogue from time immemorial. So he attributed it to god and 'god-made' Vedas, only to enhance the importance of the 'god-made' book. For that he employed unscholarly methods. The word Taar was used for telegraph in certain languages–like Hindi, Panjabi; but certainly not in Sanskrit. The word Taar means wire in those languages. But in Sanskrit, it does not mean a wire. Instead, it means–long, as in तारस्वरेण उवाच (the swara in the higher register). Swamiji was in a haste to prove the existence of modern science in the Vedas, so he took the word Taar (तार) from the Hindi language and interpreted it as if it was a Vedic word. He was to show that the Vedic Indians knew all the modern sciences thousands of years ago. What was there in his time, he tried to prove already known; but what about telephone, mobile phones, TV, internet, computer, interplanetary spaceships, Air Conditioner, refrigeration, e-mail, teleprinter etc. He could not think even in dreams about all such things. No Vedic scholar has invented or made even one item. Swamiji himself did not invent anything–though he claimed that he truely understood the Vedas and tried his best to show that all others who before him commented on the Vedas, were ignorant, if not ignoramuses. He was satisfied by saying मुद्रण यंत्रालय to printing press which was invented by others centuries before him : in the 15th century (1439 CE) by Johannes Gutenberg in German. In India it was started on

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1. *Ghashi Ram, op.cit., p. 284*

30 April, 1556 by the Christian missionaries–it entered India through Goa. No Vedic Rishi or scholar has invented it.

All the above-quoted verses and discussed/interpreted by Swamiji, are is reality such as refute the assertion that the Vedas are god-made and given to mankind at the very beginning of the world. So, it cannot be accepted that they are god-made & given to mankind for guidance at the beginning of the creation.

There is one important mantra in the Vedas, which says : I am the poet, my father is the physician, my mother throws the corn upon the grinding stones, having various occupations, desiring riches we remain (in the world) like cattle (in the stalls)–

कारुरहं ततो भिषगुपलप्रक्षिणी नना,

नानाधियो वसूयवोऽनु गा इव तस्थिम. (ऋ. 9-112-3)

Is this verse god-spoken? No, it tells the tale of the poor people of that age.

There are many such mantras as talk of 'new mantras'. All cannot be and need not be quoted here. We give here some of them.

ये च पूर्व ऋषयो ये च नूत्ना इन्द्र ब्रह्माणि जनयन्त विप्राः, (ऋ. 7-22-9) The rishis who were in the past and who are in the present i.e. who are new, they all, O Indra, create mantras in your praise.

युगे युगे विदथ्यं गृणद्भ्यो रयिं यशसं धेहि नव्यसीम्. (ऋ. 6-8-5)

Give to us, O Agni, wealth and fame; we have been singing new eulogies from time to time or in every age.

अश्रवं हि भूरिदावत्तरा वां विजामातुरुत वा घा स्यालात्,

अथा सोमस्य प्रयती युवभ्यामिन्द्राग्नी स्तोमं जनयामि नव्यम्. (ऋ. 1-109-2)

i.e. I have heard, Indra and Agni, that you are more munificent givers than an unworthy bridegroom; or the brother of a bride; therefore, as I offer you a libation, I address you, Indra and Agni, with a new hymn.

There are many more mantras of this type in the Rigveda, for example, 1-20-1, 1-38-14, 1-47-2, 1-63-9, 1-166-15, 2-39-8; 3-30-20, 4-6-11, 4-16-21, 6-18-15, 7-18-4, 7-22-9, 7-94-1, 7-97-9, 8-8-17, 9-114-2, 10-23-6, 10-80-7, etc. All these mantras clearly show that mantras or new mantras of the Vedas were written by the poets of that age who were called Rishis.

Swamiji says that the Vedas were given as a guide book to man (see chapters 2 & 3 of 'Bhoomika'). But what about other species? Baya the weaver bird makes/weaves such a nest as cannot be prepared by even an extraordinary scholar of the Vedas. If the bird Baya can do so without any Vedic guide what was the need of the Vedas for mankind? What help has been provided by the guide, the Vedas? The paper on which Vedas are written or printed; the ink with which writing or printing is done, the script in which they are written–are all these provided by the Vedas? There is no word for paper, ink, pen, printing press etc in them. Then how could they help us? What help could they provide?

Swamiji says that god gave the Vedas to mankind for he is benevolent. What is there to prove him benevolent? (shaheed) Bhagat singh says, 'This world of woes and miseries, a veritable, eternal combination of numberless tragedies : Not a single soul being perfectly satisfied.' (Why I am an Atheist). Is this world a creation of a benevolent god? There are diseases like AIDS, Cancer, encephalitis, then there is ebola virus whose victim had no cure; nipahvirus, nipahencephalitis, coronavirus the pandemic, then there is hunger, the biggest problem, there are floods, earthquakes, landslides, tsunami. People are languishing in slums, in jails. There are gang rapes and murders. Swamiji himself met a tragic death–he was given poison or powder of glass in food and he could not be saved. He was preaching the Vedas supposedly sent by the benevolent god but the men/women supposedly created by him gave a tragic death to him, despite the so-called benevolent god. Where was that benevolence? Whose benevolence? Birds do not do so–they do not poison others, though they are devoid of the Vedas of the benevolent god. The logic of benevolence fails to justify what Swamiji tries to justify in vain.

Swamiji says that as the god is the fountainhead of all learning, so he has capsuled all that in the Vedas. This assertion is devoid of any solid basis, as we have seen in the above-quoted verses regarding the sun, moon and other things. There are not even names of such things as printing press, TV, SMS, e-mail, computer, mobile phone, interplanetary spaceship, atomic energy, electricity etc., not to speak of the knowledge to make them. That is why neither Swamiji could make an aircraft like Rafale nor any other expert of Vedas or any gurukul where big groups of such experts reside.

The only science that Swamiji has taught on the basis of the Vedas is that the buring eatables in the sacrificial fire removes pollution from the air and makes it clear. He has not mentioned at which level of the pollutants the air is polluted and at which it becomes clear. He has not referred to any mantra of the Vedas to enlighten the people as to which are the pollutants of air. He has also not written or shown in the Vedas, the method of knowing the level of pollution of air. This is the state of knowledge in the Vedas!

In the chapter three of his 'Bhoomika', Swamiji says that the Vedas are eternal. In the 2nd chapter he talks about the origin (उत्पत्ति) of the Vedas. In the forgoing paragraphs we have shown that the Vedas are written by different Rishis (poets) at different times. So they cannot be eternal. Moreover, the mantras refer to present and previous Rishis, which is in impossibility with regard to an eternal thing.

When Swamiji talks about the utpatti (origins) of the Vedas, he himself precludes the possibility of eternality, because what is caused/ what is utpanna (born/given birth to), that is bound to destruction. If the Vedas are god-made, they cannot be eternal : what is made by someone, that someone may be a god or a dog, that is bound to be destroyed. What is eternal cannot be produced even by the said god if he exists.

The Vedas are a historical document of great importance. From them we know about the society that existed thousands of years ago– their material condition as well as philosophical condition; but these documents in no way can he placed, much less thrusted, as an ideal for the modern society. We must study the Vedas dispassionately to know our roots, to know about the forefathers of the present society and to know the ancient history of this subcontinent. Atheists respect the document and study it dispassionately, but neither they worship it nor do they try to follow it. They resist those who want to thrust them on modrn society in this way or that way–openly or via the back door because they belong to an ancient society that was there some thousands of years ago. In the present, they are an anachronism.

Charvaka and Anumana

Different philosophical schools admit different Pramanas. Some admit 1, some 2, some 3, some 4 and some 6. They have their own views regarding these Pramanas. But Charvaka is singled out for diatribe for limiting the operation of the Anumana pramana, whereas there are such philosophies which do not admit any pramana, including the Pratyksha and Anumana.

Shunyavadi Buddhism rejects all pramanas. Shankara, a supposed foe of the Buddhists, also sails in the same boat. He declares in the beginning of his Brahma-Sutra-Bhashyam that all the Shastras and all the pramanas are born of ignorance and hence futile for the Jnani (who has attained knowledge) : तस्मादविद्यावद्विषयाण्येव प्रत्यक्षादीनि प्रमाणानि शास्त्राणि च. (ब्रह्मसूत्रभाष्य, उपोद्घातः).

So far as the Anumana pramana is concerned, the Advaita Vedanta has also rejected the ultimate validity of it (i.e. Anumana or inference). There has been a long controversy between Udayana, the Naiyayika and Shriharsha, the Vedantin regarding the validity of inference. But no one barks at him as violently as they bark at the Charvakas.

Chitsukhacharya, a Vedantist, also rejected the Anumana Pramana. Not only that, even the Grammarian School, rejects Anumana. Bhatrihari does not accept it.

They all are 'good boys' even if they throw all the Pramanas including the Anumana to wolves, but no tongue ever wagged; whereas the Charvakas are much maligned simply owing to limiting, not totally rejecting, the Anumana Pramana. Why do they indulge in the selective and dishonest criticism against Charvaka?

Anumana pramana (inference) is based on a causal relationship which means *invariable association* (Vyapti). This Vyapti is the nerve of all inference.

But Charvaka rightly challenges this so-called universal and invariable relationship of concomitance and regards it a mere guess-work. Perception does not prove this vyapti. Inference cannot prove

it, for inference itself is said to presuppose its validity. Testimony too cannot prove it, for, it itself is not a valid means of knowledge. Secondly, if testemony proves vyapti, inference would become dependent on it. As a result, none would be able to infer anything by himself. Hence inference cannot be regarded as a valid source of knowledge. Some inferences my turn out to be accidentally true, but there is no guarantee that it will hold true even in unperceived cases.

We see generally smoke where there is fire; but LPG fire or electric ovens do not emit smoke. There may be fire, but no smoke. Why is the validity of Vyapti? In the winter season when cloths are spread in the sun, smoke starts going up from them. Where is the mother of smoke (fire)? What is the meaning of vyapti in such cases? You can hold a small piece of stone in your fist, but on the basis of this you cannot infer the holding of the Himalayas in the fist!

Kamalasheela, Shanta Rakshita's commentator, refers in his Panjika on the *Tattva-sangrah* to Purandara, 'charvakamate granthakarah' (an author of Charvaka school of thought), who says we accept Anumana which is perception-based, but do not accept that anumana which is not based on perception, such as, soul, hereafter, cosmic-brothel, cosmic-inquisition, and rebirth and good or bad results of the karmas said to have been done in the so-called previous birth or births.

After Purandara, there was no need of wasting time and energy on the anumana and Charvaka. But Hindu scholars repeatedly revisit the pre-Purandara era as a moribund patient relapses. That shows that intellecetual degeneration had set in the past, which is visible in certain fields even today. I think the revisitors try to find an excuse for the criticism of materialists and thereby they showcase their synthetic spirituality or spiritualistic fangs for materialist gains from their Aakas who are pastmasters in what the pigmies try to copy like monkeys.

It is a height of lowness that these worthies say nothing against Bhartrihari, Shankara, Shriharsha, Chitsubha and the Shoonyvadis who like the Charvakas refute anumana mercilessly, but use the choicest invective against the Charvakas for the same sin against the anumana; whereas Gautam, author of Nyaya Sutras and the great-great grandfather of all these musketeers speaks the language of the Charvakas.

Chandradhar Sharma is very rude towards the Charvakas like all the idealists, but is mum with regard to Shunyavadis, Shankara and

Shriharsha, etc. He writes : The Charvaka view that perception is valid and inference is invalid, is itself a result of inference. The Charvaka can understand others only through inference and make others understand him only through inference. Thoughts and ideas, not being material objects, cannot be perceived; they can only be inferred. Hence the self-refuted Charvaka position is called sheer nonsense and no system of philosophy.[1]

In the light of what Purandara has said, Mr. Sharma's statement seems sheer nonsense. When the Charvakas admit perception-based Anumana, they cannot be faulted on counts presented by Mr. Sharma.

The Learnd Professor should know that the ideas of other people are known from their utterances, their books, their writings, they are not inferred as fire is inferred from smoke. What were the ideas of Shunyavadis or of Shriharsha or of Shankara? They are known from their writings. You cannot infer if there is no clue, no primary or secondary source. Has any inferenceist ever correctly inferred from a terrorist as to where he would hit and in which way? The inferenceists have as miserably failed as the astrologists have. No Kashmiri Astrologist Pandit could know beforehand what was going to happen to their lives and property in that territory. When we proceed from known to unknown, there is no certainty.

Mr. Sharma is no man to declare as to which thought is a system of philosophy and which is not. The great Indian tradition gladly accepts that Charvaka is a system of philosophy, though they may not agree with him. That is why in the Sarva-darshana-sangrah of the 14th century this system of philosophy takes pride of place. Madhava, the author in the end of the chapter on Charvaka declares that this system of philosophy i.e. Charvaka philosophy, must be followed for the *Summum bonum* of the greatest number of people : तस्माद् बहूनां प्राणिनामनुग्रहार्थं चार्वाकमतमाश्रयणीयमिति.

Deductive inference is vitiated by the fallacy of *petitio principii.* (a fallacy in which a conclusion is taken for granted in the premises). It is merely an argument in a circle since the conclusion is already contained in the major premise, the validity of which is not proved. Though inductive inference tries to prove the validity of the major premise of deductive inference, yet it too is uncertain as it proceeds unwarrentedly from the known to the unkonwn. In order to distinguish true induction from simple enumeration, it is pointed out that the former is based on a

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1. *Chandradhar Sharma, A critical survey of Indian Philosophy, p. 43*

casual relationship which means Vyapti or invariable association. But that too is not fool-proof, that being merely guesswork.

Induction is uncertain and deduction is argument in a circle. So the elephant in the form of debators find themselves stuck up in the mud of inference :

विशेषेऽनुगमाभावात् सामान्ये सिद्धसाधनात्,
अनुमाभंगपंकेऽस्मिन् निमग्ना वादिदन्तिनः.

Gautama follows Charvaka

The Charvakas say that we accept that Anumana (inference) which is based on perception (Pratyaksha). But others oppose it. It is the followers of Nyaya who become hysterical in their opposition to the Charvakas whereas they should follow them, because their great-great grandfather had copied what the Charvakas said about Anumana.

Gautama, after depicting Perception in the first four Sutras, writes in the fifth Sutra–अथ तत्पूर्वकमनुमानम् (न्यायदर्शन 1-1-5). The Sutra means–Anumana follows that i.e. perception. It is because Anumana cannot be there if it does not follow perception. If we infer fire on the basis of smoke, it is so because we have been their inseparable relation, it is so because we follow what we have seen (perception). If we has not seen the coexistence of fire and smoke we cannot infer fire from smoke. All the great interpreters of Gautama–Udyotakara, Vachsapati Mishra and Vishvanatha have interpreted the sutra in the way as we interpret–तत्पूर्वं यस्य तदनुमानम्.

The Navya Nyaya has devoted much time and energy to Anumana. The father of Navya Nyaya Gangesh Upadhyaya also repeats what the Charvakas have said. He says that perception is the upajivya (basis) and inference is the upajivaka (hanger-on). That is why Anumana is discussed after perception.

The commentator Raghunatha Shiromani says that it is but natural that anumana follows perception–basis comes first and the hanger-on comes later. Secondly, as Anumana is based on the sense-organs, eyes etc., so it is hanger-on and the perception is the basis for hanging on.

That being the ground reality, all those who maliciously use invectives against the Charvakas owing to their stand regarding Anumana should feel ashamed. They should apologise for their malfeasance.

Original Vs. Translation

It is my considered view that the translation of an original work is as a commonwealth for research scholars, as the original is. We quote from the original without any hitch. The translation of the text in, say, English is nothing but a replica of that text for those who are more comfortable in that language. So they use that translation as other use the original. The translation in the book form may be translator's book for royality purpose, but the contents of the translation are by no means a copyright material of the translator. That translation can be used by any without hitch that being only the replica of the original. The conclusions reached by a scholar on the basis of original or translation are his individual achievement. But that does not apply to translation.

If one interprets the text in a particular way, then that interpretation is his copyright material; but that cannot be termed as translation. In translation also there can be some words which a translator translates in this way and other translator translates in that way. But such words are numbered. If every word is translated differently then that is interpretation, not translation.

Sir Ganganath Jha has translated many books of Hindu and Buddhist philosophy. There are others who have written several weighty tomes on Advaita of Shankara. But no one could translate the 16th and the last chapter of Sarvadarshana Sangrah, which is on Shankara & his philosophy. It may be noted here that E.B. Cowell and A.E. Gough translated the Sarva-darshana-Sangrah in 1892 and 1894; but they did not translate the 16th and the last chapter. It was translated by Klaus K. Klostermaier, a German-Canadian scholar in 1997 and it was in 1999 that it become available in book form to general public. It took more than a hundred years that the Sarva-darshana Sangrah's translation became compele in English. No Hindu scholars have done so much, but Hindu scholars are wasting time and energy on non-issues. Nayamanjari (Vol. 1) was translated in 1978 by J.V. Bhattacharya, but there is no 2nd part by him or by any other scholar even after 42 long years.

There is the *Tattva-chintamani* of Gangesha, a source book of the navya-nyaya of the 13th century. There is much splitting of hair in it. Some wrote commentaries on it while others wrote commentaries on those commentaries. All are praising the book without studying it. No one has till date translated the book in Hindi or English. Even summary of the book is not available except the one that was written by Satish Chandra Vidhyabhushan in 1920 in English in his *History of Indian Logic*. In Hindi there is nothing even of that type.

We know that all that was there in the Navya Nyaya was intellecual jugglery. No new thing was invented by the writters of commentaries upon commentaries. What Jyanta Bhatta has said in the beginning of his *Nyaya-manjari* centuries before Gangesha, aptly applies to him and his Naya Nyaya : he has no capacity to say something new (in the field of logical study), only the mode of expression is to be noticed here :

कुतो वा नूतनं वस्तु वयमुत्प्रेक्षितुं क्षमाः,
वचोविन्यासवैचित्र्यमात्रमत्र विचार्यताम्.

While writing on the Navya Nyaya, D.C. Guha has repeated almost the same : It can never, of course, he claimed nor should it ever be claimed, that the Navya Nyaya system of logic has uttered the final word on matters relating to logical enquiry.[1]

Those who shower praise on Navya Nyaya saying it has developed a language of accuracy, that may be true to some extent, but is there any accuracy in the first chapter of Mangalavada? That is simply purohita-vada in the name of logic. They have very cunning implanted the superstition in the minds of people and exposed them to the purohitas. The Navya Nyaya philosophy has been hammered into naked Brahmanism.

Mangala-vada has it to say : At the beginning of a desired undertaking, people wishing the completion of the work, perform Mangala. The venerated Acharyas say that mangala is the cause of the completion of the undertaking and the destruction of obstacles in the way to completion.

In other words, if you want to complete an undertaking and wish to remove all the obstacles in the way, do puja–worship this or that object in the name of God. To do the puja in a correct way, take the services of a priest.

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1. *D.C. Guha, Navya Nyaya System of Logic, Introduction, p. 14.*

If even after this humbug, the bridge falls, they have readymade alibis. See with what ashamedness they discuss their point further : you say that inspite of the mangala, Bana Bhatta the author of Kadambari, could not complete his book.

If he could not, it was either due to obstacles which arose after the performance of mangala or to the absence of empirical causes i.e. he lacked necessary intelligence, imagination and circumstances.

This explanation is misleading and befooling the gullibles. If even after the performance of the mangala, new obstacles come into being and cause the incompletion of the undertaking, then it is clear that the performance of mangala is useless and futile. Why the mangala could not prevent the new obstacles coming into being, if it is really a supernatural force capable to remove all the obstacles in the way?

To say, as an alternative, that the man lacked necessary intelligence etc., so his undertaking could not be completed is mischievous and callous. It is said nowhere that the effectiveness of the performance of mangala is dependent on the presence of necessary intelligence. Everywhere it is said : do mangala to remvoe obstacles. If an undertaking is completed only in the presence of necessary intelligence etc., then it is clear as day light that the performance of mangala is a redundant act only meant to provide livelihood to the Brahmana priests.

Atheists did not fall in this trap. But the social parasites were not blind to the side-effect of this fact. People, at general, could emulate their example. So to nip the evil in the bud, they came out with their version : the atheist performed the mangala in his previous life or there was no obstacle in his way!

This is the height of audacity and ugliness. He who is an atheist now, he performed mangala in his previous life, so his undertaking was completed; but the theist who performed the mangala even in this life failed to complete his undertaking!

It is all imagination that the atheist did mangala in the previous life. How do you know that? What is the proof of that?

As an alternative, they say : there was no obstacle in the way of atheist, so he succeeded. Are all obstacles reserved for theists only? Or, you, the filthy class of the social parasites, make them knowingly superstitious and vulnerable to all the abracadabra?

It must be noted here that the parasites say that what we preach is written in the Vedas. Even if it may be written in the Vedas, that does not and cannot make a nonsensical thing a scientific one. Shankara has rightly said in his Gita-Bhashya that if even if one hundred mantras of the Vedas say that fire is cold and lightless, no one shall accept that, simply the Vedas will lose their authenticity : न हि श्रुतिशतमपि 'शीतोऽग्निः अप्रकाशो वा' इति ब्रुवत् प्रामाण्यमुपैति (गीता, 18/66, शांकरभाष्यम्)

In the present case, the Vedas do not talk of mangalam. It is a brainchild of the priestly class. Gangesha says that though there is no explicit mention of mangala in the Vedas, keeping in view the practice of it, he thinks that that may be in them anywhere. This is what the Panda has to say! His lame argument is based on his ignorance and the absence of the proof. Such people are responsible for the downfall of the Hindu society. There was untouchability nowhere in the Vedas, but they brought it into being from the filth of their brains. Now it is these people who are shrieking against the provisions of reservation for those victims of their untouchability.

You cannot have it both ways : when you were dominating you imposed untouchability, because that suited to your social status and when the untouchables are getting compensation you say that that must not be there because that is unsuited to out social status! You must face the music of your own doings!

A Note on Mythology : Heaven and Hell

Mythology of every religion has stories of gods and goddesses. As those stories were created in different milieus thousands of years ago so they contain many things which are to the modern taste not unobjectionable. The Hindu mythology is no exception to it.

The atheists of ancient India–Charvakas–referred to such stories in their attack on the religionists–sometimes they are used as satire and sometimes they are used to show the hydraheadedness of their opponents. These stories are mostly concerned with rape, murdur, adultery, dishonesty, etc.

The Hindu tradition has given its verdict on the character of gods in the Bhagavata Mahapurana which I quote below :

King Pareekshit, grandson of Arjuna, asked Shukadeva Muni :

संस्थापनाय धर्मस्य प्रशमायेतरस्य च,
अवतीर्णो हि भगवानंशेन जगदीश्वरः. 27
स कथं धर्मसेतूनां वक्ता कर्ताऽभिरक्षिता,
प्रतीपमाचरद् ब्रह्मन् परदाराभिमर्शनम्. 28
आप्तकामो यदुपतिः कृतवान् वै जुगुप्सितम्,
किमभिप्राय एतं नः संशयं छिन्धि सुव्रत. 29

(It was in fact for establishing Dharma on a sound footing as well as for the suppression of that which is other them Dharma (viz. Adharma) that Lord Shri, Krishna, descended along with his part manifestation. (27) How (then) did, 'He, the Promulgator, Institutor and Conservator of ethical stardards, commit a transgression in the shape of embracing others' wives, O holyone? (28) With what intention indeed did that Lord of Yadus, perpetrate a repelling act? (Pray), resolve this doubt of ours, O sage of sacred vows! (29).

Then the sage replied in this way :

धर्मव्यतिक्रमो दृष्ट ईश्वराणां च साहसम्,
तेजीयसां न दोषाय वह्नेः सर्वभुजो यथा. 30

नैतत्समाचरेज्जातु मनसाऽपि ह्यनीश्वरः,
विनश्यत्याचरन्मौढ्याद्यथा रुद्रोऽब्धिजं विषम्. 31
ईश्वराणां वचः सत्यं तथैवाचरितं क्वचित्,
तेषां यत्स्ववचो युक्तं बुद्धिमांस्तत्समाचरेत्. 32.
(श्रीमद्भागवतमहापुराण, 10/33/27-35)

(*Violation of Dharma and overboldness (too) is witnessed on the part of the mighty.* It does not bring (any) sin on those possessed of exceptional glory as in the case of fire, that consumes everything. (30) He who is not powerful should never deliberately attempt this even mentally; for he who does so through folly will meet his ruin even as anyone other than Rudra would if he were to swallow the poison churned out of the ocean. (31) A precept (alone) of the mighty is authoritative. *Their conduct is worth imitating on certain occasions only.* (Therefore) an intelligent man should follow only such conduct as is consistent with their own precept)[1].

This reply raises more questions than it answers. Why don't the mighty people walk the talk? Why are their precepts authoritative when their conduct is authoritative only on certain occasions? Why this dichotomy? Is it our national character? Why do we talk something and act something else?

Dr. Ambedkar says : Hindu philosophy, whether it is Vedanta, Sankhya, Nyaya, Vaishashika, has moved in its own circle without in anyway affecting the Hindu religion. It has never had the courage to challenge this gospel. That Hindu philosophy that everything is Brahma remained only a matter of intellect. It never became a social philosophy. The Hindu philosophers had both their philosophy and their Manu held apart in two hands, the right not knowing what the left had. The Hindu is never troubled by their inconsistency.[2]

This inconsistency is visible throughout the reply of Shukadeva of the Bhagavata Purana. Why a mighty (ईश्वर) is full of inconsistency? Why is it that if his precept goes to the east, his conduct goes to the west?

Shri Krishna in the Mahabharata stands with Arjuna but gives his Narayani Sena to Duryodhana. Why did he put his feet in two boats? Is it inconsistency or stark opportunism? Manibhadra, a Jain philosopher, says :

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1. *Srimad Bhagavada Mahapurana, with Sanskrit Text and English translation, Part II, pp. 242-43, Gita Press Gorakhpur.*
2. *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar : Writing and Speeches, Vol. 1, p. 219*

श्रोतव्यः सौगतो धर्मः, कर्तव्यः पुनरार्हतः,
वैदिको व्यवहर्तव्यो ध्यातव्यः परमः शिवः.
(षड्दर्शनसमुच्चयः, मणिभद्रकृत 'लघुवृत्ति' व्याख्या)

(The doctrine (Dharma) of Sugata (Buddha) is to be listened to; that of the Arhat (Jain) is to be done (कर्तव्यः); that of the Veda is to be practised and the highest Shiva is to be meditated upon.)

This is our philosopher who is totally footless. This has became our tradition : always on the horns of dilemma.

Note on स्वर्ग & नरक

There are four Vedas, but Swarga (Heaven) does not find mention in all of them. It is found only in Atharva Veda (2/34/5; 11/1/20; 18/4/14; 4/33/8; 9/5/16, etc.)

But geographical pieces of information are found in some of the Brahmana granthas only. Those informations are more contradicted by other Brahmana granthas than they are conformed.

It is said that Swarga is up in the sky and its distance from the earth is equivalent to the height of one thousand cows : if one thousand cows stand one on the other. At that height is swarga : यावद् वै सहस्रं गाव उत्तराधरा इत्याहुस्तावदस्माल्लोकात् स्वर्गो लोक इति (ताण्ड्य ब्राह्मण 16-8-6).

An other Brahmana grantha says that it is away from here equivalent to the passage covered by a horse in one thousand days–सहस्राश्वीने वा इतः स्वर्गो लोकः (ऐतरेय ब्राह्मण, 2/17)

Tandya Brahmana says that if we go along the river Saraswati one can reach there in 44 days–चतुश्चत्वारिंदाश्विनानि... इतः स्वर्गो लोकः सरस्वतीसंमितेनाध्वना. (तां.ब्रा. 25-10-16)

The gate of Swarga is situated in North-East direction. एतस्यां (उदीच्यां प्राच्यां) दिशि स्वर्गस्य लोकस्य द्वारम् (शतपथ ब्राह्मण, 6-6-2-4)

There are Nine or Ten Swargas–one Brahmana grantha says there are 9 while an other says there are 10 :

(1) नव स्वर्गा लोकाः (ऐतरेय ब्राह्मण 4/16)

(2) दश स्वर्गा लोकाः (गोपथ ब्राह्मण 2-6-2)

So for as Naraka is concerned, it is not found in the Vedas and main

Brahmanas according to the Vedic Kosha. It is mentioned only in a less known Brahmana granth : नरकं गतानि नरकं गमयन्ति (जैमिनि उत्तर ब्राह्मण 4/25/6)

But we find the word Naraka in the Atharva Veda (12/4/36) and also in the Yajur Veda (30/5) where it is used as नारक.

These statements are made by humanity in its childhood. Now when there are so strong telescopes as can see even the face of sun, which is 14,95,97,870 kms (14 crore, 95 lakh, 97 thousand, 8 hundred and seventy) away; when there are interplanetary spaceships who travel 17500 miles (or 28000 km) per hour no Swarga etc can remain unknown. But they have found no place like Swarga or Naraka. All such things are the imagination of the people concerned.

Brihaspati (बृहस्पति)

There are two Brihaspatis in the Rig Veda–(1) Brihaspati Aangirasa, who is the author of hymn no. 71 of the 10th Mandala, and (2) Brihaspati Laukaya (=son of Loka), who is the author of hymn no. 72 of the same Mandala of the Rigveda.

This 2nd Brihaspati is the son of Loka and he was the founder of ancient atheism in India : Laukayata or Barhaspatyam. In the hymn composed by Brihaspati Laukya, we find :

असतः सदजायत (RV 10-72-2) i.e. of the non-existent (असत्) was born the existent (सत्).

These words are repeated in the third verse also. In the Upanishads also these words are repreated : असद् वा इदमग्र आसीत्, ततो वै सदजायत (Chhandogya Up. VI. 2)

Brihaspati does not say that in the beginning there was god; but he says that non-existent/inanimate was there and from that existent/ animate came into being. Surely, seed of atheism was sown by him. The name of the Purohita of the gods is also Brihaspati. Max Muller says : It seems strange, that the same name, that of the preceptor of the gods, should have been chosen as the name of the representative of the most unorthodox, athestical, and sensualistic system of philosophy in India.[1] The learned Professor should know that this name was not chosen, it was a case of fait accompli. The name Brihaspati was given to the son of Laukya much before he developed his philosophy. If that is also the name of the Purohita of the gods, it makes no difference.

It may be noted here that the Vaidikas invented stories to malign Brihaspati : his followers were called demons and his teaching were declared pernicious. Such stories can be seen in the Brahmanas and Upanishads.

In the Maitrayana Upanishad (7, 9), we read thus :

बृहस्पतिर्वै शुक्रो भूत्वेन्द्रस्याभयायासुरेभ्यः क्षायायेमामविद्यामसृजत्, तया शिवमशिवमित्युद्दिशन्त्यशिवं शिवमिति. वेदादिशास्त्रहिंसकधर्माभिध्यानमस्त्विति वदन्त्यतो

1. *Maxmuller, The Six Systems of India Philosophy, p. 94*

नैनामभिधीयेतान्यथैषा वन्ध्येवैषा रतिमात्रं फलमस्या वृत्तच्युतस्येव नाऽऽरम्भणीयेति. (मैत्र्युपनिषद्, उपनिषदां समुच्चयः, पृ. 506)

Brihaspati, having become or having assumed the shape of Shukra, brought forth that false knowledge, for the safety of Indra and for the destruction of the Asuras (demons). By it they show that good is evil and that evil is good, and they say that this new law, which upsets the Veda and the other sacred books, should be studied (by the Asuras). That being so, it is said, let no man (but the demons only) study that false knowledge, for it is wrong; it is, as it were, barren. Its reward lasts only as long as the pleasure lasts, as with one who has fallen from his station (caste). Let that false doctrine not be attempted.

In the Chhandogya Upanishad (VIII. 8) we read thus : (as quoted by Maitri Upanishad)

देवासुरा ह वै य आत्मकामा ब्रह्मणोऽन्तिकं प्रयातास्तस्मै नमस्कृत्वोचूर्भगवन् वयमात्मकामाः, स त्वं नो ब्रूहीत्यतश्चिरं ध्यात्वाऽमन्यतान्यतात्मानो वै तेऽसुरा अतोऽन्यतममेतेषामुक्तं तदिमे मूढा उपजीवन्त्यभिष्वंगिणस्तर्याभिघातिनोऽनृताभिशंसिनः सत्यमिवानृतं पश्यन्ति. इन्द्रजालवदित्यतो यद्वेदेष्वभिहितं तत्सत्यं; यद्वेदेषूक्तं तद्विद्वांस उपजीवन्ति. तस्माद् ब्राह्मणो नावैदिकमधीयीत. (छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् यथा मैत्र्युपनिषदि उद्धृता.)

i.e. The gods and the demons, wishing to know the self, went once into the presence of Brahman (ब्रह्मन्), (their father Prajapati). Having vowed before him, they said : 'O Blessed One, we wish to know the self, do thou tell us.' Thus, after considering, he thought, *these demons believe in a difference of the Atman (from themselves)*, and therefore a very different self was taught to them. On that self these deluded demons take their stand, clinging to it, destroying the true boat of salvation, and praising untruth. What is untrue they see as true, like jugglery. But in reality, what is said in the Vedas, that is true. What is said in the Vedas, on that the wise take their stand. Therefore *let no Brahmana study those books that are non-vedic*, or this will be the result (as in the case of the demons).

In the Maitri Upanishad, Brihaspati is made to give false instruction to the demons, while in the Chhandogya Upanishad it is Prajapati who imparts false knowledge of the Atman to the Asuras.

These two stories deserve separate treatment. In the first story, the purpose is to say indirectly that the teaching of Brihaspati are false. Secondly, they want that Vedic people should run away from him, they

want to secure their flocks lest they should follow Brihaspati. The method is very shrewd and subtle. They spread canard to the effect that Brihaspati is our man and what he preaches is meant to mislead the Asuras and thus to help us in the long run. So, what he says is meant for Asuras and what he imparts is false knowledge that is meant for their fall. So, Brihaspati's teachings are for a specific purpose and those are not for the Vaidikas. In fact, those are to destroy the enemies of the Vaidikas.

In this way they tried to isolate him. To counter his philosophy they had no counter-arguments; they were only trying to lessening his followers by creating doubts about his integrity–he is our man who is working actually for our benefit, spreading false knowledge, so you people go to Vedic gurus for your benefit. Shun him. Are they not the forefathers of Goebbels?

They were philosophically pigmies who had no logic or fact to counter the philosophy of Brihaspati. What they did was sheer petty politics. Their actions did not advance the cause of humanity, in stead, they prevented progress. This is no way of dealing with new and strong ideas, only dullards follow this path for their own loss.

Perhaps this is the oldest recorded proof of how new ideas were destroyed, how those ideas were treated that were different in nature from the ones in vogue in the society. Here in India all were free to have any idea, all were welcome, diversity was honoured, etc. such-like assumed catholicity is a myth that is being preached retrospectively. Truth is what the Upanishad depicts in so many words without mincing them. That is perhaps the human weakness that man clings to the old and used things though that may be harmful but repells new and untried ideas and things though that may be beneficial for him.

In the 2nd story, meanness is more deep and shows how Brahma/ Prajapati intentionally himself imparts false knowledge to Asuras. He does not dispel their ignorance but knowingly misguides them when they came with a request for true knowledge.

Here Prajapati thinks if they get right knowledge, they may prosper; which scenario is abhored by him. He wants their destruction, so he imparts false knowledge. He keeps true knowledge away from them.

Here again politics, jealousy and selfishness dance in naked form. The asuras are seekers after truth, but the monopolists of knowledge, the

custodians of Jnana, behave arrogantly and distribute ignorance among them instead of true knowledge. They are not the preachers of truth.

In the first story they distort the teachings of Brihaspati and here the Brahma/Prajapati knowingly imparts false knowledge. What a great civilization! I do not see there any open-heartedness, pure-heartedness, gentle-heartedness or truth-seekerness.

Prof. Max Muller writes : If then in the Upanishads already Brihaspati was introduced for the purpose of teaching wrong and unorthodox opinions, we may possibly be able to understand how his name came to cling to sensualistic opinions, and how at last, however unfairly, he was held responsible for them. That such opinions existed even at an earlier time, we can see in some of the hymns in which many years ago I pointed out these curious traces of an incipient scepticism. In later Sanskrit, a Barhaspatya, or a follower of Brihaspati, has come to mean an infidel in general.[1]

The third degree tactics of the Vaidikas failed to quell the ideas of Brihaspati. That is why, we find among the works mentioned in the Lalita-vistara as studied by the Buddha, a Barhaspatyam (a book by Brihaspati) is mentioned, though from that it does not become clear whether the book was in the sutras or in verses :

Max Muller says that it is well known that the Lalita-vistara is rather a broken reed to rest upon for chronological purposes. But he seems to give weightage to a later day Bhashyam (scholion) of Bhaskara on the Brahma-sutras, when he says : if we may trust, to a scholion of Bhaskara on the Brahma-Sutras, he seems to have known, even at that late time, some sutras ascribed to Brihaspati, in which the doctrines of the Charvakas, i.e. unbelievers, were contained. Here he cautions–'But although such sutras may have existed, we have no means of fixing their date as either anterior or posterior to the other philosophic sutras.'[2]

Brihaspati's views are also available in other books in verses, as if taken from a karika (book written in verses) rather than from Sutras. "They possess a peculiar interest to us", says Max Muller, "because they would show us that India, which is generally considered as the home of all that is most spiritual and idealistic, was by no means devoid of sensualistic philosophers. But though it is difficult to say how old

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1. *Max Muller, op.cit., p. 96*
2. *Ibid, p. 97*

such theories may have been in India, it is certain that, as soon as we get any coherent treatises on philosophy, sensualistic opinions crop up among them."

Comparing the doctrines of Buddha and Brihaspati, he says that the doctrines of Buddha would be called sceptical and atheistic by the Brahmans (the Vaidikas) and Charvaka as well as Naskita are names freely applied to the Buddhists, but the doctrines of Brihaspati go far beyond Buddhism, and may be said to be hostile to all religious feelings, while Buddha's teaching was both religious and philosophical, though the lines separate philosophy and religion in India are very faint.

The followers of Brihaspati seem to indicate the existence of other schools of philosophy by their side. The Barhaspatyas speak as if being *inter pares*, they differ from others as others differed from them. 'Traces of an opposition against the religion of the Vedas (Kautsa) appear in the hymns, the Brahmanas, and the sutras; and to ignore them would give us an entirely false idea of the religious and philosophical battles and battle-fields of ancient India. As viewed from a Brahmanic point of view, and we have no other, the opposition represented by Brihaspati and others may seem insignificant, but the very name given to these heretics would seem to imply that their doctrines had met with a world-wide acceptance (Lokayatikas). Another name, that of Nastika, is given to them as saying No to everything except the evidence of the senses, particularly to the evidence of the Vedas, which, curiously enough, was called by the Vedantists Pratyaksha, that is, self-evident, like sense-perception."[1]

These Nastikas, 'a name not applicable to mere dissenters, but to out and out nihilits only', are interesting to us from a historical point of view, because in arguing against other philosophics, they prove, *ipso facto*, the existence of orthodox philosophical systems before their time. The recognised schools of Indian philosophy could tolerate much; they were tolerant, even towards a qualified atheism, like that of the Samkhya. But they had nothing but hatred and contempt for the Nastikas.

Madhava, in his Sarva-Darshana–Sangraha, begins with an account of the Nastika or Charvaka system. He looks upon it as the lowest of all, but nevertheless, as not to be ignored in a catalogue of the philosophical forces of India.

Ibid., p. 98

Charvaka is given as the name of a Rakshasa, and he is treated as a historical individual to whom Brihaspati or Vachaspati delivered his doctrines. Says Max Muller[1], the name of Charvaka is clearly connected with that of charva and this is given as a synonym of Buddha by Balashastrin in the Preface to his edition of Kashika (p2). He is represented as a teacher of the Lokayata or world-wide system or a system originated by the son of Laukya.

The Prabodh-Chandrodaya gives a short account of this system in the following words : In the Lokayata system, the senses alone form a authority; in it the elements are earth, water, fire and wind; in it wealth and enjoyment form the ideals of man; in it the elements think; the other world is denied and death is the end of all things.

The word Lokayata occurs in Panini's Gana Ukthaadi. Hemachandra Jain distinguishes between Barhaspatya or Nastika and Charvaka or Lokayatika, though he does not tell us which he considers the exact points on which the two are supposed to have differed. That being so he cannot be taken seriously. The Buddhists use Lokayata for philosophy in general. The Lokayatas admit one Pramana (authority of knowledge) namely sensuous perception and inference based on it while others admit more Pramanas, as the Vaisheshika admits 2 : perception and inference; the Samkhya admits 3 : adding trustworthy affirmation (Aaptavakya); the Nyaya admits 4 : adding comparison (Upamana); and the two Mimansas admit 6 : adding presumption (Arthapatti) and privation (Abhava).

So far as elements are concerned, it seems it took sometime to develop the idea of 4 or 5 elements. The history of the Greek gives such an impression, yet such an idea was evidently quite familiar to the Charvakas. While other systems admitted 5 elements–earth, water, fire, air and ether or sky–the Charvakas admitted four only, excluding ether probably because it was invisible.

Max Muller remarks (this) exhibits to us the Charvakas as denying rather what had been more or less settled before their time, than as adding any new ideas of their own. The learned Professor should know that trimming or delimiting is as important in research and progress, as adding may be. Now four 'elements' are accepted, thought not in the technical sense. But ether has been rejected by the modern science. That

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1. *Ibid, p. 99*

shows that the Charvakas were right in denying the existence of ether. What matters is corrective contribution by way of trimming or adding. Only adding for the sake of addition is no contribution, because that does not make reality more comprehensible than before.

Though everyone in India has a word for soul, yet the Charvakas denied that. They held that what was called soul was not a thing by itself, but was simply the body over again. They held that it was the body that felt, that saw and heard, that remembered and thought, though they saw it every day rotting away and decomposing, as if it never had been. By such opinions they naturally came in conflict with religion even more than with philosophy. For the evolution of consciousness and intellect, they have their materialistic interpretation. They say that as the intoxicating power can be developed by mixing certain ingredients, which by themselves are not intoxicating, likewise consciousness etc. is produced by the temporary arrangement of atoms of the subtle matter. (Today we know and all admit that Grey matter contains most of the brain's neuronal cell bodies. The grey matter includes regions of the brain involved is muscle control, and sensory perception such as seeing and hearing, memory, emotions, speech, decision-making, and self-control. The anterior grey column contains motor neurons. If grey matter is removed, man becomes only a lump of flesh–as good as dead.)

Those who were opposing the Charvakas had no other basis for consciousness etc. than saying that was the god-given soul that did all. Such a ready-made explanation can be cited by a child even. Lazy brain can produce such-like mythological gossips, but cannot explain as Charvakás did. They were the forerunners of Neuroscience, psychology and anatomy. To say that god did it, god given soul did it; to say it is god who makes day and night or who causes it to rain, is the sign of intellectual infancy of humanity. Charvakian attitude indicates humanity's slow motion towards maturity.

The Charvakas say : There are four elements-earth, water, fire and air. From these four elements alone is produced intelligence, just like the intoxicating power from kinwa, etc., mixed together. Since in 'I am fat', 'I am lean', these attributes abide in the same subject, and since fatness, etc., resides only in the body, it alone is the soul, and no an other thing. And such phrases as 'my body' are only significant metaphorically :

अत्र चत्वारि भूतानि भूमिवार्यनलानिलाः,
चतुर्भ्यः खलु भूतेभ्यश्चैतन्यमुपजायते.
किण्वादिभ्यः समेतेभ्यो द्रव्येभ्यो मदशक्तिवत्,
अहं स्थूलः कृशोऽस्मीति सामानाधिकरण्यतः.
देहः स्थौल्यादियोगाच्च स एवात्मा न चापरः,
मम देहोऽयमित्युक्तिः संभवेदौपचारिकी. (सर्वदर्शनसंग्रहः)

Charvaka means to say that the immaterial soul cannot be fat or lean. These qualities can exist only in material things. A soul which is immaterial cannot be fat or lean. As fat or lean is the body, so body is '1'/or the soul who says '1'. Secondly, so long as there is an intact human body, there is consciousness. When there is corpse, consciousness is no more there. In the absence of a body no soul can exist and there is no consciousness without body. So, it it clear that consciousness is body-specific. And you may call that soul, otherwise there is no extra soul. Says Prof. Max Muller, in this way the soul seems to have been to them the body qualified by the attribute of intelligence, and therefore supposed to perish with body.[1] Their this assertion is in consonance with the Rig Vedic declaration according to which Atma is perishable. The Rig Vedic mantra runs thus :

यदिमा वाजयन्नहमोषधीर्हस्त आदधे,
आत्मा यक्ष्मस्य नश्यति पुरा जीवगृभो यथा. (ऋ. 10-97-11)

(As soon as I take these plants in my hand making (the sick man) strong, the soul (आत्मा) of the malady (यक्ष्मा) perishes before (their application) as (life is driven away from the presence) of the seizer of life.)

There is no ambiguity–आत्मा यक्ष्मस्य नश्यति (The soul of Yashma (malady) perishes.)

Here it must be noted that when Asuras requested Prajapati (Brahman) to instruct them about soul, they were thinking that soul was different from them–स अमन्यतान्यतामानो वै तेऽसुराः. Therefore, he (Prajapati) instructed them accordingly a wrong doctrine of soul being different from the man. What is the karnel of this story found in Chhandogya Upanishad? The karnel is this : according to Prajapati the Asuras were wrong because they believed in soul different from them. Then the correct doctrine as per the Prajapati of the Chhandogya Upanishad was

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1. *Ibid, p. 100*

to believe that soul was not different but was identified with the man. Here soul was considered not separate from the body. Prajapati was Charvakian no doubt.

The Charvakas say life is to live. If a person takes birth, he has two options either to live or to commit suicide; there is no third alternative. If he wants to live, he would need good living conditions, he would need basic necessities, there should be some joy, some happiness, some breathing space. Without joy he would feel it difficult to live. So man tries to change his condition. He creates joy, though short lived. He does not say that he would not enjoy this pleasure because it is short-lived. So the Charvakas considered that the highest end of man was enjoyment, though that might he short-lived; though there might be pain after the end of enjoyment :

त्याज्यं सुखं विषयसंगमजन्म पुंसां
दुःखोपसृष्टमिति मूर्खविचारणैषा,
व्रीहीञ्जिहासति सितोत्तमतण्डुलाढ्यान्,
को नाम भोस्तुषकणोपहितान्हितार्थी.

(The pleasure which arises to men from contact with sensible objects, is to be relinquished as accompanied by pain/sorrow–such is the warning of fools. The berries of paddy, rich with the finest white grains, what man, seeking his true interest, would fling them away, because covered with husks and dust?)

Prof. Max Muller remarks that the Charvaka system was practical, rather than metaphysical, teaching utilitarianism and crude hedonism.[1]

The spiritualists/idealists say that Charvakian pleasure is short-lived and one feels pain when the joy comes to an end. So this philosophy is bad. We believe in permanent joy which is spiritual.

This is empty verbiage. They eat what does not satisfy their hunger for ever; they drink what does not quench their thirst for good; they do no sleep for ever, they do not wake for ever : what do they have or what do they do for ever? That being so, of which pleasure they talk that they would get for good? When everything is impermanent, undergoing change constantly, including the earth on which they sit, then what is permanent? Has anyone got that permanent pleasure? It is simply chasing the mirage–chasing a will-o-the wisp. All those who

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1. *Ibid, p. 101*

clamoured for chimera, are themselves no more; what to speak of their getting the pleasure for good! All the seekers of the permanent bliss were parasites who depended on alms–food begged from 'ignorant' 'worldly people'! Those who could not earn bread for even temporary satisfection of their hunger, when would they earn the pleasure said to be eternal? Search for permanent pleasure–a chimera–is the luxury which only the freeloaders can afford. On the contrary, the Charvakas believe in labour, they earn their bread and enjoy what is available and what can be attained. They are realist people who deem it foolish to waste time and energy in chasing the chimera of permanent pleasure.

Prof. Max Muller says : It is a pity that all authoritative books of these materialistic philosophers be lost, as they would probably have allowed us a deeper insight into the early history of Indian philosophy than the readymade manuals of the six Darshanas on which we have chiefly to rely.[1]

He further says that "it would be far easier to prove that Buddha derived his ideas from Brihaspati than from Kapila, the reputed founder of the Sankhya."[2] He says that it was the denial of the authority of the Veda which, in the eyes of the Brahmanas, stamped Buddha at once as a heretic and drove him to found a new religion or brotherhood; while those who followed the Samkhya, and who on many important points did not differ much from him, remained secure within the pale of orthodoxy. Some of the charges brought by the Barhaspatyas against the Brahmanas, who followed the Veda are the same which the followers of Buddha brought against them. On the contrary, the Samkhya agrees, however inconsistently, with orthodox Brahmanism on the vital question of the authority of the Veda and differs from the Buddhist.

Though we can well imagine what the spirit of the philosophy of the ancient India heretics, whether they are called Charvakas or Barhaspatyas, may have been, we know, unfortunately, much less of their doctrines than of any other school of philosophy. They are to us no more then names... credited with certain utterances. We know a few of the conclusions at which they arrived, but of the processes by which they arrived at them, we know next to nothing.[3]

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1. *Ibid, p. 101*
2. *Ibid, p. 103*
3. *Ibid, 103-04.*

This important era of human development is clouded by ignorance as there is paucity of literature and other allied material. (Historically it seems, that the atheists/heretics are called Barhasptyas (followers of Brihaspati). Then they were called Lokayatas as Brihaspati was son of Laukya. Later on they were called Charvakas.)

In the Sarva-darshana-sangraha, Madhava, the author, says that Brihaspati has himself said in the following words that–(तदेतत्सर्वं बृहस्पतिनाप्युक्तम्) :

न स्वर्गो नापवर्गो वा नैवात्मा पारलौकिकः,
नैव वर्णाश्रमादीनां क्रियाश्च फलदायिकाः. 1

(There is no paradise, no deliverances, and certainly no soul (Atma) goes to the so-called next word. *The acts of Ashramas (stating in life Brahmacharya, etc.) and those of castes, produce no rewards).*

अग्निहोत्रं त्रयो वेदास्त्रिदंडं भस्मगुण्ठनम्,
बुद्धिपौरुषहीनानां जीविका धातृनिर्मिता. 2

(The Agnihotra, the three Vedas, the three staves (carried by ascètics) and smearing oneself with ashes–they are the modes of life made by their creator (it is used here ironically instead of svabhava or nature) for those who are devoid of sense and manliness (energy/or heroism).

पशुश्चेन्निहतः स्वर्गं ज्योतिष्टोमे गमिष्यति,
स्वपिता यजमानेन तत्र कस्मान्न हिंस्यते. 3

(If a victim slain at the Jyotishtoma will go to heaven, why is not his own father killed there by the sacrificer?)

It would be more beneficial! Instead of sending the animal to the most covetous heaven, send your own father there. Why everyone avoids to send his father there? Because they tell a lie about the fate of the slain victim?

मृतानामपि जन्तूनां श्राद्धं चेत्तृप्तिकारणम्,
निर्वाणस्य प्रदीपस्य, स्नेहः संवर्धयेच्छिखाम्. 4

(If the Shraddha-offering gives pleasure to beings that are dead, then the oil poured in the lamp, after it has quenched, should increase the flame!)

गच्छतामिह जन्तूनां व्यर्थं पाथेयकल्पनम्,
गेहस्थकृतश्राद्धेन पथितृप्तिरवारिता. 5

(If the Shraddha-offering gives pleasure to the persons that are dead,.then to give provisions to the traveler for a journey here on earth, would be useless.)

The sons etc., should perform a Shraddha at home to feed the traveler! They say, in this way the traveler can not be fed. We ask if on the earth your Shraddha fails to feed the man, how can it feed in the hereafter a very distant and unknown place?

स्वर्गस्थिता यदा तृप्तिं गच्छेयुस्तत्र दानतः,
प्रासादस्योपरिस्थानामत्र कस्मान्न दीयते. 6

(If those who are in (distant) heaven derive pleasure from offering given here, then why not give food here to the people while they are standing on the roof?)

If a person standing on the roof does not get satisfied by the food given in Shraddha below in the room, how can those be satisfied by that who are supposed in the distant heaven?

[1]यावज्जीवं सुखं जीवेन्नास्ति मृत्योरगोचरः,
भस्मीभूतस्य देहस्य पुनरागमनं कुतः. 7

(One should lead a life in pleasure; no one is free from death; when once body is burnt, it cannot come back.)

यदि गच्छेत्परं लोकं देहादेष विनिर्गतः,
कस्माद् भूयो न चायाति बन्धुस्नेहसमाकुलः. 9

(If he who has left the body (i.e. soul) goes to another world, why does he not come back again perturbed by love of his relations?)

ततश्च जीवनोपायो ब्राह्मणैर्विहितस्त्विह,
मृतानां प्रेतकार्याणि न त्वन्यद्विद्यते क्वचित्. 10

(Therefore funeral ceremonies for the dead ordered by the Brahmanas (priests), are a means of livelihood; nothing else is known anywhere.)

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1. *This verse is found in the beginning of the chapter on Charvaka in the Sarva-darshna-sangrah. But it is also found in a variant form-may be opponents changed the verse to distort the teachings of Brihaspati. The verse runs thus :*

यावज्जीवेत्सुखं जीवेदृणं कृत्वा घृतं पिबेत्,
भस्मीभूतस्य देहस्य पुनरागमनं कुतः? 8

(As long as one lives, let him live happily; after borrowing money, let him drink Ghree. (Note, Charvaka does say 'drink wine'. Those who say that Charvaka believes in 'eat, drink & be merry', should note the word Ghee). How can there be a return of the body after it has once been reduced to ashes?)

त्रयो वेदस्य कर्त्तारो भंडधूर्तनिशाचराः,
जर्भरीतुर्फरीत्यादि पण्डितानां वचः स्मृतम्. 11

(The three makers of the Vedas were buffoons, knaves and demons. The speech of the Panditas is unintelligible, like the words–Jarbhari, Turphari, etc.)

अश्वस्यात्र हि शिश्नं तु पत्नीग्राह्यं प्रकीर्तितम्,
भण्डैस्तद्वत्परं चैव ग्राह्यजातं प्रकीर्तितम्. 12

(The obscene act that at the horse sacrifice to be performed by the queen has been proclaimed by knaves, and likewise other things to be taken in hand.)

[1]मांसानां खादनं तद्वन्निशाचरसमीरितम्. 13

(Likewise, the eating of flesh and other such things was ordered by demons.)

The Brahmana priests are referred to here as the demons.

तस्माद्बहूनां प्राणिनामनुग्रहार्थं चार्वाकमतमाश्रयणीयमिति रमणीयम्.

(Therefore for the *summum bonum* of the maximum people, the Charvakian philosophy must be followed. That would be good.)

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1. *From this verse it seems that the Charvaka were vegetarians and detested the eating of flesh. From the verse 8 it is clear that they did not drink wine etc.; instead they preferred Ghee. They were not believers in 'eat, drink & be merry'. They seem to be sattvik (pure/clean/kind and gracious) people.*

Charvaka Darshan and other philosophies

Charvaka is the only Darshan which is bold enough to take life as it is. All the other darshanas of India say that life is a bondage (Bandhana). That is why from the birth till death, they remain busy, so they show, or at least in theory, in casting off the bondage to get freedom from the supposed cycle of birth and death. Therefore, they abhor pleasure, joy etc., in theory, and prefer vairagya (detachment) again in theory, the Charvakas do not pretend so. (The fact that saints are serving long jail-terms for raping their followers, speaks volumes for the practical side of those who swear by vairagya.) They do not condemn joy etc. in theory and practically avail every opportunity of enjoyment. They boldly say that life is to enjoy and make it more enjoyable. They are not hypocrites. They walk the talk. All other philosophies say one thing in theory but practically, they do quite another thing.

All the other philosophies, with the exception of Buddhism, believe in an eternal *Atma* which goes from one birth to another and make a cycle of birth & death until it gets freedom from it. Buddhism says that there is no atma. So this theory is called Anatmavada (no soul-ism). The Charvakas and the Bauddhas are equally No-soul-ists.

If there is no soul, there is no need of heaven or hell and there is no scope for rebirth and transmigration. While the Charvakas do not believe in heaven, hell, hereafter, transmigration, etc., the Buddhists believe in all that because they have given all the attributes of soul to the Karman. Karman causes rebirths and deaths until one get Nirvana (freedom from that cycle).

It is clear that the Buddhists are not as free as the Charvakas are, because they have all the paraphernalia of a soulist philosophy to entrap the person. So despite their anatmavada, they are as good as atmavadis.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar presented the Buddhism in a rational way and raised objection to rebirth etc. based on Karman, but on this count, he is more ignored by his followers than followed.

The Charvakas do not believe in *god*. The Buddha also does not believe in it. Likewise, Sankhya philosophy and Poorva Mimansa

their aim is to guide man for the realization of the four basic ends of human life.

These four ends are basic to hu man life, is a baseless declaration. People are repeating this declaration like a parrot. Dharma is for soul and not for man as we understand him–a species evolved from the hominid family (the great apes), a bio-chemical unit.

Dharma is a word which ha: no fixed meaning. There are many dharmas that have been fighting and even at present, they do so from time to time. That being so, it is not clear which dharma is there for fulfilling the man's purpose of life. Every dharma claims that it is qualified to serve that purpose. If these warring dharmas are fulfilling the life's purpose, it is better to get rid of them.

These dharmas are for the upliftment of soul. They are supposed to help in the hereafter. Man as an evolved species does not need such imaginary crutches in the so-called hereafter of which every dharma has created its own version to contain its sheep.

Second purushartha is freedom from bondage (मोक्ष/मुक्ति). This freedom from an imaginary bondage is bogus and nothing short of self-deception. What would man get if he gets freedom from nothing–from no actual bondage?

If one gets freedom from ignorance, poverty, disease, exploitation, there he gets real freedom. But to believe in the freedom from the bondage that is not there, is to believe in fake freedom. This is a ploy used by some cunning people for their own benefit at the cost of the majority of innocent persons. That is why all those who follow the mirage of mukti, remain all their lives victims of true exploitation at the hands of cunning capitalists and snollygoster politicians

Then all the dharmas have different versions of Mukti–some say in that state one feels supreme bliss while others say that in that state one becomes insenstive like a stone, still others say in that state on loses one's identity and merges with the supreme while others say one does not lose one's identity. Some say that Mukti once attained, is for ever, while others say that Mukti is not for ever; it is for a limited period. How can such a Mukti be the purpose of man–an evolved species?

Purushartha number one and two seem to be misnomers for they are useless for man. They may be of any purpose for soul–Atmarthas.

Shloka-varttika that our Yogis have investigated the matter and have found that there is no special organ that a Yogi has but other human beings do not have. A Yogi cannot see more than an ordinary man because despite practising Yoga, he is basically a human being.[1]

The Charvakas also have such-like objections and they say that if a yogi pretends to see the hereafter, heaven, etc. he only does so to deceive the gullibles.

I think that if a yogi 'really' perceives what other human beings cannot, he simply hallucinates–he sees in his imagination what he has learnt from the Hindu scriptures. He cannot see the Jannat or 72 huries or Christ because he is not conversant with the Islamic or Christian tradition.

In the history of Yoga–which is thousands of years old–no Yogi has ever seen a thing that was not seen by ordinary persons. They could not see even that the earth beneath their feet was/is moving. No yogi could see what an ordinary person can see with a telescope or a microscope. What Galileo Galilei could see (with his telescope), no any Mahayogi could see in thousands of years–not even Patanjali, the author of the Yoga-sutras!

Yoga-sutras make tall claims which are contrary to the known facts. There is a sutra which runs thus—अहिंसाप्रतिष्ठायां तत्सन्निधौ वैरत्यागः (योगसूत्र 2/35) which means : when a man becomes steadfast in his abstention from harming others, then all living creatures will cease to feel enmity in his presence. The Commentator elaborating the sutra further says : when a man has truly and entirely renounced violence in his own thoughts and in his dealings with others, he begins to create an atmosphere around himself with which violence and enmity must cease to exist because they find no reciprocation. Animals, too, are senstive to such an atmosphere. Wild beasts may be temporarily cowed

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1. *इहजन्मनि केषांचिन्न तावदुपलभ्यते. 93*
योग्यवस्थागतानां तु न विद्मः किं भविष्यति,
योगिनां चास्मदीयानां त्वदुक्तप्रतियोगिनी. 94
त्वदुक्तिविपरीता वा बाधबुद्धिर्भविष्यति,
ईदृक्त्वे योगिबुद्धीनां दृष्टांतो न तवास्ति च. 95
दृष्टांतस्त्वस्मदादीनां यो गृहीतः स विद्यते,
अथ स्तम्भादिबुद्धीनां वदेत् सप्रतियोगिताम्. 96
(श्लोकवार्त्तिक, निरालम्बनवादः)

with whips, but they can only be rendered harmless by the power of genuine harmlessness.[1]

All this sounds very pleasant and sublime on paper. But the fact of life are totally different from this idyllic verbiage. The Panchatantra tells us that a lion killed Panini, the author of Sanskrit grammar; an elephan crushed Muni Jaimini, the author of Mimansa-sutras and a crocodile swallowed Pingala, the author of chhandah shastra. Keeping all these examples in view, the author of the Panchatantra concludes that wild animals who are ignorant and fierce have nothing to do with such qualities as goodness, scholarship or Ahinsa :

सिंहो व्याकरणस्य कर्तुरहरत्प्राणान्प्रियान्पाणिने-
र्मीमांसाकृतमुन्ममाथ सहसा हस्ती मुनिं जैमिनिम्,
छन्दोज्ञाननिधिं जधान मकरो वेलातटे पिंगलम्,
अज्ञानावृतचेतसामतिरुषां कोऽर्थस्तिरश्चां गुणैः? (पंचतंत्र, 2/36)

As all this had happened in the past, the Charvakas did not believe in these Yogic gossips and they have rightly excoriated its imaginary supernatural powers. When in the later centuries the islamic invaders attacked India and temple were looted, idols were broken, no yogic power of any Yogi could do anything to prevent these happenings. Bookish and wild claims proved futile at every step. So the Charvakas reject this unrealistic school of thought.

The Charvakas do not believe in Karman (कर्म) i.e. an action done in this birth will have its effect in the supposedly next birth or the actions done in supposedly previous birth/s are affecting the present life. They say when nothing survives death, then how can the actions affect the doer when he is no more there? All other philosophies have soul which is supposed to survive the death. That soul is made to suffer the effects of all the karmas done in previous birth. One fails to understand all the rigmarole regarding the karmas, when it is said that the soul[2] does not get cut by sword, it does get heated or burnt by fire, it does not get dried up by air and it does not get wetted by water (Gita, 2/23). How can such a soul face reward of the so-called previous births? If it has done good, it can not feel joy and if it has done bad it can not feel

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1. *Swami Prabhavanada, Patanjali Yoga Sutras, p. 102*
2. *नैनं छिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि नैनं दहति पावकः,*
   न चैनं क्लेदन्त्यापो न शोषयति मारुतः. गीता 2/23

bad consequences therefor. How can such a stone-like soul, immune and impune to everything be subject to good or bad consequences of the karmas? Those who proclaim that such a soul undergoes joys and sorrows as fruits of previous actions, they indulge in non-serious talk, only to befool the gullibles.

The Gita says that soul does not do anything even in this world. It only feels that it is doing when it is deluded by Ego–अहंकारविमूढात्मा कर्ताहमिति मन्यते. (Gita 3/27) When it refuses to he deluded by Ego, then it no longer feels doing any thing. It means actually soul does not do anything. It simply feels doing something only when deluded by Ego. When actually soul does not do anything how can it be held responsible for the deeds not actually done by it, even though it might have felt doing them when it was under delusion? When soul does not do anything in fact and when it is immune and impune to sorrow and joy; heat and wetting and to sword and air, it cannot be said to be undergoing effect of deeds previously done. No person in his senses can hold the soul responsible for the deeds not actually done by it. Even if one tries to reward or punish it for good or bad deeds, he will miserably fail to do so, because the soul is immune to all things–good or bad, joy or sorrow. It is therefore futile to say that soul does deeds in one birth and reaps its fruits in another birth : soul actually does nothing (as per Gita) and it cannot be punished or rewarded because it is immune to such thing (as per Gita and Upanishads). The non-serious talk about soul doing deeds and undergoing its consequences is illogical and false. Charvaka is right when he says there is no karman–not of previous birth as there is no previous birth and no karman of this birth is going to do anything in the next birth, because there is no rebirth.

That is why the Gita categorically says that a knower of reality knows that the organs born of matter of Prakriti interact with the objects born of Matter or Prakriti : तत्त्ववित्तु महाबाहो गुणकर्मविभागयोः, गुणाः गुणेषु वर्तन्त इति मत्वा न सज्जते. 3/28

According to the Gita, there is monism. The Organs of karma and Jnana (sense) are born of matter and they automatically interact with the objects born of the same matter. So there is no duality : doer and deed are the same and they interact automatically.

They say that there are four Purusharthas (purposes of man)– Dharma, Moksha, Artha and Kama. All the other darshanas say that

their aim is to guide man for the realization of the four basic ends of human life.

These four ends are basic to hu man life, is a baseless declaration. People are repeating this declaration like a parrot. Dharma is for soul and not for man as we understand him–a species evolved from the hominid family (the great apes), a bio-chemical unit.

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Second purushartha is freedom from bondage (मोक्ष/मुक्ति). This freedom from an imaginary bondage is bogus and nothing short of self-deception. What would man get if he gets freedom from nothing–from no actual bondage?

If one gets freedom from ignorance, poverty, disease, exploitation, there he gets real freedom. But to believe in the freedom from the bondage that is not there, is to believe in fake freedom. This is a ploy used by some cunning people for their own benefit at the cost of the majority of innocent persons. That is why all those who follow the mirage of mukti, remain all their lives victims of true exploitation at the hands of cunning capitalists and snollygoster politicians

Then all the dharmas have different versions of Mukti–some say in that state one feels supreme bliss while others say that in that state one becomes insenstive like a stone, still others say in that state on loses one's identity and merges with the supreme while others say one does not lose one's identity. Some say that Mukti once attained, is for ever, while others say that Mukti is not for ever; it is for a limited period. How can such a Mukti be the purpose of man–an evolved species?

Purushartha number one and two seem to be misnomers for they are useless for man. They may be of any purpose for soul–Atmarthas.

So these two are meaningless for man. That is why the Charvakas have declared that अर्थकामौ पुरुषार्थौ i.e.to earn and to enjoy these two are the purposes of human life. It is sad to note that no philosophy teaches man how to perform those two purusharthas which are needed for life : to earn (to have) & to enjoy. Only the Charvakas tell that one should grow agricultural products, do animal husbandry, do commerce etc. All other philosophies look down upon such mundane activities. That is why the bigwigs of all philosophical schools avoid labour and believe in freeloading. They say we are labouring for Mukti (freedom) in the hereafter. In the name of that 'labouring' they remain all the life free from labour and their followers do extra labour to raise such parasites in a luxurious style : shepherd is free here and in the 'hereafter' while the sheep overwork like a donkey here for the imaginary freedom in the imagined hereafter.

It is pretended by those who talk of the four purushartha, that without Dharma and Moksha, the philosophy becomes a depraved thing. It is all empty verbiage. Which depravity was not here where all the philosophies have been trumpeting the four purusharthas? Here some persons were declared untouchables, some others unseeable; women were burnt alive with the dead bodies of the husbands; children were given in marriages; molten lac or lead was poured into the ears of those shudras who happened to hear the recital of the Vedic verses; religious debauchery was practised in the name of Niyoga, Devadasis, polyandry and polygamy, there were animal sacrifices, even human sacrifices were there.

You name any depravity and that was there despite the four purush arthas. Then what is the benefit of those appended concepts–of dharma and moksha? When the hands of dharma are so adharmic, what gain can be there? That is why the Charvakas accept only two purusharthas and reject the two others–dharma and moksha.

Moksha is a pigeon that is supposedly caught only after death, but there is no proof if one has caught it or not. Some say that pigeon can be caught by one even when he is alive. But the result is the same : he who claims that he has attained moksha, he proves of no use to the society. There is no yard stick to know wheather he had got moksha or not. Those who believe his assertion freeload him more than before. But he is as useless for society as others like him are. When nothing

survives the death, then what is the meaning of getting moksha after death? That is like issuing an outdated cheque of a bank that is no more there. That is why the Charvakas do not entertain such like childish talk. They detest the idea of suffering exploitation in life silently and labouring for the mukti (freedom) after death (when nothing survives) from the bondage (which is nowhere).

Even if we accept for the sake of argument that soul survives death and one gets mukti after death, what is the rationale of submissively suffering exploitation at every step while you are alive and clamouring for freedom from all bondage and exploitation when you are dead? Why do the votaries of Mukti after death show such an abhorrence for mukti/ freedom throughout their lives while living on the earth? True votaries of freedom, do not behave in this way. It seems they are pseudo votaries while the Charvakas are true votaries because they strive throughout their lives for freedom/literation.

Pessimism is stated as one of the characteritics of Indian philosophy. Almost all the Darshanas are crying–life is pain; world is pain; man is to reach his real abode from where he has fallen, soul is seeking to meet the great soul-Paramatma, etc. It is strange that despite all protestations no one hurries to go back from where he has supposedly come! No one jumps into Ganga who lives on the bank of that river, no one commits suicide to cut short his worldly stay. From the profession and the praxis, I sometimes gather the impression that these are all frivolous statements only to he made mechanically as a religious ritual to earn punya (reward/religious merit).

The Charvakas are the only philosophers who are free from this claptrap, because they do not say that birth is pain, life is pain etc. They try to change the painful into agreeable, into painless. So they do not follow the practise of breast-beating about the pain present in the world. They show the remarkable spirit of resistance, of fight and victory. As a result they do not chase the mirage of Moksha or Mukti (literation after death from the supposed chain of birth and death)!

Shankara : Culmination of Indian Philosophy?

A myth has been created in recent times that Shankara was the culmination of Indian philosophy, whereas Indian, say Hindu, tradition does not think so. On the contrary they say that he was a crypto Buddhist. His mayavada is declared to be a bad Shastra–मायावादमसच्छास्त्रं प्रच्छन्नं बौद्धमेव च.[1]

In the Skanda Purana, there are many verses which condemn Shankar and his system of philosophy which is said to be Buddhism in cryptic form :

बौद्धशास्त्रपरो विप्रो यः कश्चिद्वारपरशिष्यकः,
स शंकरश्च संन्यस्य तस्मात्संन्यासरूपिणः,
वेदान्तमतमित्येद् दुष्टशास्त्रं चकार हः.[2]

i.e. Shankara is a Brahmana who follows Buddhism or he is a pupil of a Buddhist Brahmana. He preached Vedanta which is a bad Shastra (दुष्टशास्त्रं).

Can such a person, cursed by the Indian tradition, he called the culmination of Indian philosophy?

Shankara seems to be a confused philosopher or at least he knowingly confuses others so that he may say whatever is appropriate in a particular situation to defeat the opponent without being, at the same time, consistent with his other proclaimed principles. In the very beginning of his Brahma-Sutra-Bhashyam, he declared that all the Shastras and Pramanas are but ignorance : तस्मादविद्यावद् विषयाण्येव प्रत्यक्षादीनि प्रमाणानि शास्त्राणि च.[3] But when we go through the whole book, there is nothing but a surfeit of quotations of Shastras approvingly inserted here and there.

If the Shastras and Pramanas are but ignorace what is the meaning of quoting those Shastras in this way? Are you preaching ignorance

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1. *उद्धृत : पं. रघुनंदन शर्मा, वैदिक संपत्ति, प्रथम संस्करण 1930 ई. (संवत् 1987), पृ. 489*
2. *Ibid, p. 489.*
3. *Brahmasutram with the Bhashya of Shankara, p. 3*

or knowledge? Are you still in ignorance or have come out that? When Shankara talks in terms of empirical knowledge and when he conveniently, takes shelter in the ultimate knowledge, is not known. He does so at his sweet will when it suits him. He is always on a sticky wicket but the so-called ultimate knowledge is his open sesame.

Despite his playing the philosophic game of hide and seek, in his Brahma Sutra Bhashyam the cat is out of the bag. His dreadful and Anti-Constitutional utterances deserve to the exposed. While commenting on the Sutra (1-3-38)–श्रवणाध्ययनार्थप्रतिषेधात्स्मृतेश्च. (ब्रह्मसूत्र 2-3-38)–he states :

वेदश्रवणप्रतिषेधो वेदाध्ययनप्रतिषेधस्तदर्थज्ञानानुष्ठानयोश्च प्रतिषेधः शूद्रस्य स्मर्यते. श्रवणप्रतिषेधस्तावत् 'अथास्य वेदमुपशृण्वतस्त्रपुजतुभ्यां श्रोत्रप्रतिपूरणम्' इति. 'पद्‌युह वा एतच्छ्मशानं यच्छूद्रस्तस्माच्छूद्रसमीपे नाध्येतव्यम्' इति च. भवति च वेदोच्चारणे जिह्वाच्छेदो धारणे शरीरभेद इति. अत एव चार्थादर्थज्ञानानुष्ठानयोः प्रतिषेधो भवति 'न शूद्राय मतिं दद्यात्' इति. 'द्विजातीनामध्ययनमिज्या दानम्' इति वेदपूर्वकस्तु नास्त्यधिकारः शूद्राणामिति स्थितम्. (ब्रह्मसूत्र, शंकरभाष्य, पृ. 138-39)

i.e. This is another reason why the Shudra has no right : By the Smriti he is debarred from hearing, studying and acquiring the meaning of the Vedas. The Smriti mentions that a Shudra has no right to hear the Vedas, no right to study the Vedas, and no right to acquire the meaning of the Vedas (and perform the rites). As for prohibition of hearing, we have the text, 'Then should he happen to hear the Vedas, the expiation consists in his ears being filled with lead and lac.' (Gautama Dharmasutra, XII, 4), and 'He who is a Shudra is a walking crematorium. Hence one should not read in the neighbourhood of a Shudra.' (Vasishtha Smriti, 18). From this follows the prohibition about study. Then there is the chopping off of his tongue if he should utter the Vedas, and the cutting of the body to pieces if he should commit it to memory (Gautam Dharma Sutra XII, 4) From this it follows by implication that the acquisition of meaning and acting on it are also prohibited, as is stated in, 'Vedic knowledge is not to be imparted to a Shudra' (Manu, IV. 80), and 'study, sacrifice and distribution of gifts are for the twice-born' (Gautama Dharma Sutra, IX. 1)... The conclusion stands that a Shudra has no right to knowledge through the Vedas.[1]

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1. *Brahma-Sutra-Bhashya of Shri Shankaracharya, tr. by Swami Gambhirananda, Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta, Third Edition, 1977, p. 233-34.*

This raises a slew of questions. Are the Vedas so bad that their mere recitation by a person attracts such a severe punishment? If they are full of knowledge, why were the Shudras–OBC + SC + ST, etc.–debarred from even the hearing of their recitation? Why was the knowledge placed beyond the reach of a big chunk of the society? Was there conspiracy to keep the majority of the people ignorant? Does a philosopher teach the people or debar them from learning? He who conspires to keep the people ignorant, is he a philosopher? Is he not the enemy of the masses? Is he not an anti-Constitutional guy? Is Shankara here speaking from empirical point of view or ultimate point of view? If in the beginning he was talking in ultimate terms, what caused him to speak here from the empirical point of view? Even if he speaks from the empirical point of view, what is the rationale for this discriminatory and anti-human (anti-Constition) bullshit? What was the compulsion for such a cruel and misanthropic scheme of society. Why does Shankara reserve the knowledge of Vedas only for the upper (Dvija) castes and why does he throw the majority of people in the abyss of ignorance and darkness? Can such a philosophy be called the culmination of philosophy? If such is the zenith what would the nadir? Can such a nonsense he termed as philosophy?

The upper caste people are crying against the revervation policy, according to which SCs, STs and OBCs are given special facilities : in jobs, in admissions in educational institutions and other fields. They should, instead of crying against these people, thank their Shankar for all that; because it is the nemesis of what Shankara planned for the dvijas (upper castes)! They are tasting the ripe fruit of the poisonous tree planted by their 'worthy' forefathers, philosophers, scriptures and Dharmagurus.

Shankara plays the game of hide and seek in the name of empirical and ultimate. That is his Mayavada (Illusionism). That is in a way his escape route. Rahul Sankrityayan says in his *magnum opus* Darshana-Digdarshana that mother is maya; father is maya; wife also is maya; benevolence is maya; malevolence is maya; the intestines of a poor, which are being crushed with work and due to hunger, are maya; the puffed belly of the richman who does no work and his erected moustache are also maya; the slave being beaten with a whip and ensanguine is also maya; the merciless master of the slave who whips the innocent is also maya; thief is also maya; moneylender is also maya; enslaved India

also maya; independent India too maya; voilence of Hitler also maya, nonviolence of Gandhi too maya. Heaven as well as hell are maya; Dharma and Adharma are also maya; liberation also maya; bondage of the world too is maya; all is maya, nothing else. This is the mayavada of Shankara, which is an effective instrument to completely protect every oddity, every oppression, in the society. (Darshana Digdarshana, p. 819)

If everything is maya, then how the Shudra is a reality? Then from where do come lac and lead to fill his ears? Then from where do come the dvijas (the upper castes), the interests of whom he is submissively serving? Where does evaporate his maya in such discriminatory cases? If everything in maya, how casteism is a reality? Mayavada is a weapon which is used to protect the interests of certain sections of society and also to crush the other sections of society. In a way his mayavada & Advaitavada are other names for social discrimination, social injustice and social repression. This social injustice has sunk the ship of India. The much-maligned reservations for the SCs, STs, BOCs, BCs are there only to dethrone this social injustice with a vengeance. When you were ruling the roost, you sowed the poison. Now face the music! When madcaps are philosophers, social scientists, Dharma-gurus, and authors of scriptures, then no good result can be expected in the long run.

The perfect man according to Shankara is he who has gone beyond the three gunas. No rule applies to him, he is beyond the pale of good or bad, he is a maverick;

निस्त्रैगुण्ये पथि विचरतां, को विधिः को निषेधः.

Why a perfect man of Shankara is perfectly maverick and no responsible to the society from which he gets alms and over which he casts his shadow of perfectionism; or does he serve the interests of a particular section under this innocuous cover to the detriment of the interests of the toiling masses?

Even if such persons kill the poor, they will-be declared beyond the pale of sin. They would remain sinless, even after killing all the men in the street, this is what Gita says : हत्वाऽपि स इमांल्लोकान्न हन्ति न निबध्यते. (गीता 18/17) i.e. He does not become bound, even by killing all these creatures.

Shankara says, while commenting on this verse of the Gita, that though here is an oxymoronic expression–even after killing, he does

not kill, but here nothing is wrong; because though the bodies are destroyed in the empirical sense; they are not killed in the ultimate sense because their souls are alive, as they cannot be killed–ननु हत्यापि न हन्तीति विप्रतिषिद्धमुच्यते यद्यपि नैष दोषः लौकिकपारमार्थिकदृष्टिमाश्रित्य हत्यापीत्याह. यथादर्शितां पारमार्थिकीं दृष्टिमाश्रित्य 'न हन्ति न निबध्यते' इति. एतदुभयमुपपद्यते एव.

Such-like pieces of paralogism come handy when they justify or explain away the murder of Shambooka and the cutting of the thumb of Aaikalavya as both of them were poor and Shudra! But when Abhimanyu, the son of Krishna's sister, was killed, then the same Krishna who provoked Arjuna to kill his grandfather, Guru and other relatives in the name of eternal soul, was upset badly and then forgot that only the body of the boy had been destroyed, not his soul. When others are killed you say, only body gets killed; but when your near & dear is killed, then only body does not get killed! Why this double-talk? They say : What is sauce for goose is sauce for the gander. But here different yardsticks are used in the name of empirical and ultimate! If you do, it is leela, if we do, then character dheela (loose)! You want to eat the cake and have it. But that can be no more! This philosophy is a class philosophy–it cripples the common man and serves the interests of the upper castes (Dwijas).

Shankara was not a philosopher but a religious leader, that too of a particular brand of religion. In the preface to his Gita-Bhashyam, he categorically states that god Vishnu, with the intention to protect the world took birth for the protection of Brahmanism (ब्राह्मणत्व) as Krishna. It is with the protection of Brahmanism that Vedic religion can be saved, to whom the division of castes and Ashramas are subservient : जगतः स्थितिं परिपिपालयिषुः स आदिकर्ता नारायणाख्यो विष्णुः ब्राह्मणत्वस्य रक्षणार्थं कृष्णःकिल संबभूव. ब्राह्मणत्वस्य हि रक्षणेन रक्षितः स्याद् वैदिको धर्मस्तदधीनत्वाद् वर्णाश्रमभेदानाम्. (गीताभाष्यम्, पृ. 1)

Here the word Brahmanism is conspicuous. So far as I remember, it is here that the word Brahmanism is used for the first time.

Both Krishna and Shankara violate the rules of castes and Ashramas. Krishna belongs to the tribe/castes which are not Dvija. Ahir or Yadav, the castes associated with him, are OBCs, not the upper castes. What interest could he take to establish such a casteism in which he was to be given the lowest rung–the Shudra? It seems Shankara believed like

many others that the author of the Gita was Krishna, whereas the truth is that he is only a character in the book written by a person whose identity cannot be established. Dr. Radhakrishnan has candidly stated : We do not know the name of the author of the Gita. Almost all the books belonging to the early literature of India are anonymous.[1] That means the anonymous author has attributed his own ideas to his main character–Shri Krishna. When the Krishna of Gita, a character created by the anonymous author, says that he has created the four fold division of casteism, it is the author who is voicing his idea from the mouth of that character. Those ideas are not of Shri Krishna of the Mahabharata, because in that epic we do not find him engaged in such matters. So first part of what Shankara says in invalid.

Krishna also did not follow Ashrams. From the Harivansh Purana and such books as depict his life, it is clear that he did not enter the Vanapratha Ashrama and the Sannyasa Ashrama. His death took place while he was a Grihastha though the time was for him to procced to the 3rd Ashrama.

In this way neither Casteism, nor Ashramism find favour with Shri Krishna. So, the second part of Shankara's assertion is also not valid.

Shankara too did not follow the established pattern, as found in the Manu Smriti of the Ashramas. The Asharamas are followed one by one–firstly Brahmacharya, then Grihastha, then Vanapratha and then Sannyasa. But Shankara jumped from the first to the fourth Ashrama.

That being so, all the talk becomes superfluous, though god Vishnu and his Avatar are also dragged in.

Shankara professedly holds a brief for Brahmanism (ब्राह्मणत्व). That is a sectarian stand and that is not like a philosopher; because sectarian attitude inclines towards fanaticism. When Shankara attacks the Buddha, there is naked fanaticism. He says : Buddha exposed his own incoherence in talk when he instructed the three mutually contradictory theories of the existence of eternal objects, existence of consciousness, and absolute nihilism; or he showed his malevolence towards all creatures, acting under the delusion that these creatures would get confused by imbibing contradictory views. The idea is that the Buddhist view should

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1. *S. Radhakrishnan, The Bhagvad Gita, p. 114*

he abjured in every way by all who desire the highest good[1] : अपि च, बाह्यार्थविज्ञानशून्यवादत्रयमितरेतरविरुद्धमुपदिशता सुगतेन स्पष्टीकृतमात्मनोऽसंबद्धप्रलापित्वं, प्रद्वेषो वा प्रजासु विरुद्धार्थप्रतिपत्त्या विमुह्येयुरिमाः प्रजा इति. सर्वथाऽप्यनादरणीयोऽयं सुगतसमयः श्रेयस्कामैरित्यभिप्रायः. (ब्रह्मसूत्र, 2-2-32, शांकरभाष्यम्)

One cannot understand fully such-like fanatic religious attacks unless we know that Shankara is a self-professed protagonist of Brahmanism.

Brahmanism discriminates between man and man on the basis of caste and between man and woman on the basis of gender. That is why what is mildly stated in the Gita, is explained by Shamkara in an emphatic way. The Gita (9/32) talks of Papayonis; but Shankara says : who are those people who are papayonis? They are women, Vaishyas and Shudras–पापजन्मानः, के त इत्याह स्त्रियो वैश्यास्तथा शूद्राः (गीता शंकरभाष्यम् 9/32)

Here he categorically states that these people–discriminated on the basis of gender and caste–are born from the womb of sin.

From it, it is clear that the Gita which gives the same status to Vaishya that was given to the Shudras, was written in the pre-medieval period of Indian history when the status of the Vaishya fell below–as then both the Vaishya and Shudras were engaged in cultivation. This situation was there in the 7th and the 8th centuries of the C.E..

Shankara could not free himself from the straitjacket in which he found himself owing to his birth in a Brahmana family–Namboodripada Brahmana family to be sure. A philosopher worth his name frees himself and others from the traditional straitjackets and gives then a new and progressive message, which is conspicuous by its absence in Shankara. He only roams in the same groove of past which his grandguru (guru of his guru, namely Gaudapada) had produced with the help of idealist Buddhists.

Shankara is eloquent when it comes to refute reason and rationalism as well as to establish irrationalism. In his commentary on Brahmasutra 2-1-11. He says : इतश्च नागमगम्येऽर्थे केवलेन तर्केण प्रत्यवस्थातव्यम्. यस्मान्निरागमाः पुरुषोत्प्रेक्षामात्रनिबन्धनास्तर्का अप्रतिष्ठिता भवन्ति. उत्प्रेक्षाया निरंकुशत्वात्. तथाहि कैश्चिदभियुक्तैर्यत्नेनोत्प्रेक्षितास्तर्का अभियुक्ततरैरन्यैराभास्यमाना दृश्यन्ते. तैरप्युत्प्रेक्षिताः सन्तस्ततोऽन्यैराभास्यन्ते इति न प्रतिष्ठितत्वं तर्काणां शक्यमाश्रयितुं, पुरुषमतिवैरूप्यात्.

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1. *Brahma-Sutra-Bhashyam, tr. Swami Gambhirananda, p. 426.*

अथ कस्यचित् प्रसिद्धमाहात्म्यस्य कपिलस्य चान्यस्य वा संमतस्तर्कः प्रतिष्ठित इत्याश्रीयेत. एवमप्यप्रतिष्ठितत्वमेव. *प्रसिद्धमाहात्म्यस्यानुमतानामपि तीर्थकराणां कपिलकणभुक्प्रभृतीनां परस्परविप्रतिपत्तिदर्शनात्* (...) यद्यपि क्वचिद्विषये तर्कस्य प्रतिष्ठितत्वमुपलक्ष्यते तथापि प्रकृते तावद्विषये प्रसज्यत एवाप्रतिष्ठितत्वदोषादनिर्मोक्षस्तर्कस्य. नहीदमतिगम्भीरं भावयाथात्म्यं मुक्तिनिबन्धनमागममन्तरेणोत्प्रेक्षितुमपि शक्यम्. (...) अपि च सम्यग्ज्ञानान्मोक्ष इति सर्वेषां मोक्षवादिनामभ्युपगमः, *तच्च सम्यग्ज्ञानमेकरूपं वस्तुतन्त्रत्वात्.* एकरूपेण ह्यवस्थितो योऽर्थः स परमार्थः. लोके तद्विषयं ज्ञानं सम्यग्ज्ञानमित्युच्यते, यथाग्निरुष्ण इति. तत्रैवं सति *सम्यग्ज्ञाने पुरुषाणां विप्रतिपत्तिरनुपपन्ना.* तर्कज्ञानानां त्वन्योन्यविरोधात्प्रसिद्धा विप्रतिपत्तिः. यद्धि केनचित्तार्किकेनेदमेव सम्यग्ज्ञानमिति प्रतिपादितं तदपरेण व्युत्थाप्यते, तेनापि प्रतिष्ठापितं ततोऽपरेण व्युत्थाप्यत इति प्रसिद्ध लोके. कथमनेकरूपानवस्थितविषयं तर्कप्रभवं सम्यग्ज्ञानं भवेत्? न च प्रधानवादी तर्कविदामुत्तम इति सर्वैस्तार्किकैः परिगृहीतो येन तदीयं मतं सम्यग्ज्ञानमिति प्रतिपद्येमहि. न च शक्यतेऽतीतानागतवर्तमानास्तार्किका एकस्मिन् देशे काले च समाहर्तुं तेन तन्मतिरेकरूपैकार्थविषया सम्यङ्मतिरिति स्यात्. वेदस्य तु नित्यत्वे विज्ञानोत्पत्तिहेतुत्वे च सति व्यवस्थितार्थविषयत्वोपपत्तेस्तज्जनितस्य ज्ञानस्य सम्यक्त्वमतीतानागतवर्तमानैः *सर्वैरपि तार्किकैरपह्नोतुमशक्यम्.* अतः सिद्धमस्यैवोपनिषदस्य ज्ञानस्य सम्यग्ज्ञानत्वम्.[1]

For this further reason, one should not on the strength of mere logic challenge something that has to be known from the Vedas. For reasoning, that has no Vedic foundation and springs from the mere imagination of persons, lacks conclusiveness. For man's conjecture has no limits. Thus it is seen that an argument discovered by adepts with great effort is falsified by other adepts; and an argument hit upon by the latter is proved to be hollow by still others. So nobody can rely on any argument as conclusive, for human intellect differs. If, however, the reasoning of somebody having wide fame, say for instance, Kapila or someone else, be relied on under the belief that this must be conclusive even so it surely remains inconclusive, inasmuch as people, whose greatness is well recognized and who are the *initiators of scriptures (or schools of thought)–for instance, Kapila, Kanada, and others–are seen to hold divergent views.*

Although reasoning may be noticed to have finality in some contexts, still in the present context it cannot possibly get any immunity from the charge of being inconclusive; for this extremely sublime subject-matter, concerned with the reality of the cause of the Universe

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1. *ब्रह्मसूत्रभाष्यम्, पृ. 193-94*

and leading to the goal of liberation, cannot even be guessed without the help of the Vedas. And we said that it cannot be known either through perception, being devoid of form etc., or through inference etc., being devoid of the gounds of inference etc.

Besides, (taking *avimoksa* to mean "absence of liberation"), it is the accepted view of all who stand by liberation that freedom from bondage comes from true illumination. And *that true enlightenment has no diversity,* since its content is the thing-in-itself. That content of knowledge is said to be the most real since it ever remains the same; and in the world, the knowledge of that kind is said to be right knowledge, as for instance, the knowledge about fire that it is hot. This being the case, *people should have no divergence when they have true knowledge,* whereas the difference among people whose knowledge is based on reasoning is well known from their mutual opposition. For it is a patent fact of experience, that when a logician asserts, "This indeed is the true knowledge", it is upset by somebody else. And what is established by the latter is disproved by still another. How can any knowledge, arising from reasoning, be correct, when its content has no fixity of form? Again, the follower of the theory of Pradhana is not accepted by all logicians as the best among adepts in reasoning, in which opposite case alone could his knowledge be accepted by us as right knowledge. It is not also possible to assemble all the logicians of past, present, and future at the same place and time, whereby to arrive at a single idea, having the same form and content, so as to be the right knowledge. But since the Vedas are eternal and a source of knowledge, they can reasonably reveal as their subject-matter something which is (well established and) unchanging; and the knowledge arising from them can be true, so that no logician, past, present or future can deny it. Hence it is proved that the knowledge arising from the Upanisads is alone the true knowledge. And since there can be no other source of true knowledge, *(avimoksaprasangah)* "there will arise the possibility of liberation being ruled out". So the conclusion stands firm that in accordance with the Vedas and *reasoning conforming to the Vedas,* conscious Brahman is the material and efficient cause of the universe.[1]

Here Shankara condemns that what he himself is practising, he tries to refute reason and rationalism with the help of the same reason which

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1. *Brahma-Sutra-Bhashya, tr. Swami Gambhirananda, pp. 321-23*

he, in his supreme wisdom, is typing to destroy. The inclusiveness of reasoning is established by reasoning itself. He should have put up his case without holding the same crutches which he is condemning. This double-facedness exposes the weakness of his assertion.

He says all the five or 7 other schools of thought are false, because they all differ among themselves. But like the proverbial potter he praises his own pottery. He says all do not agree what they say, so they all are to be rejected. But he forgets that all those also do not agree with what he himself says. Owing to the difference of opinion, his thoughts are as invalid as of others are.

He says all others are false–Kapil, Kanada etc. When all have achieved that knowledge with the help of Samadhi and Ritambhara Prajna, how can their knowledge be dubbed false? If their knowledge is false, then the claim that in the state of Samadhi one gets true knowledge too is false.

Shankara has underlined the fact that all the six darshanas have divergent views. This assertion should prod those orthodox people who are repeatedly saying that all the six darshanas say one and the same thing and are writing articles and books to preach that.

Shankara says that as all the darshanas have divergent views, so they are to be rejected, but Upanishads have only one view, so they must be followed. But that is not true; because the Upanishads themselves express divergent views. If one Upanishad says that from that self originated space (एतस्मादात्मन आकाशः संभूतः, तै. उप. 2/1), the other says that "that created fire (तत्तेजोऽसृजत, छा.उप. 6-2-3) yet another says that fire originated from air (वायोरग्निः, तै. 2/1). When the Upanishads also have as divergent views as other darshanas have, then how can they be accepted as authentic? Shankara is either blind to this diversity of views or he tries to explain away this diversity and creates a hotchpotch of opposing views.

Shankara does not provide more strong alternative to reason which he unsuccessfully tries to dethrone. He puts forward Vedas and Upanishads as an alternative and says that those books contain true knowledge. But all the other five darshanas also refer to those books. Even then they have reached divergent conclusions and all are at variance with Shankara. That being so, a question arises : Why are the

followers of the same Vedas/Upanishads at variance with each other? Why do they not reach one and the same conclusion? Who is at fault– the followers or that which is followed? Shankara tries to show that the followers were at fault and he is right as he has rightly understood those books. But such-like self-praise is not valid; because we know that every potter praises his own pottery : all the five darshanas also say like him that they are valid. Shankara says that they are false because they use their own intellect and that he is right because he uses the intellect of the people who were there in the hoary past. But they too had divergent views. He miserably failed to provide an unfailing guide in place of reason. To follow him is equivalent to what is said in the proverb–out of the frying pan into the fire!

Manu says : आर्षं धर्मोपदेशं च, यस्तर्केणानुसंधत्ते स धर्मं वेद नेतरः (मनु 12/106) i.e. he and nobody else, knows virtue and vice who seeks to understand the teachings about virtue and vice, imparted by the sages with the help of reasoning.

This in fact constitutes a recommendation for reasoning, for it is thus that one has to discard faulty stuff and resort to the faultless one. There is no sense in being a fool just because one's forefathers were so : नहि पूर्वजो मूढ़ आसीदित्यात्मनापि मूढेन भवितव्यमिति किंचिदस्ति प्रमाणम्. (ब्रह्मसूत्रभाष्य, पृ. 193)

The Quran says : They say : 'we shall follow what we found our fathers fellowing', (would they do that) even though their fathers did not understand anything nor were they guided. (2/170)

Thus we see that Shankara's stand is against common sense and even his honourable Manu. He in a way advocates irrationalism which is detrimental for the human kind. Do his words used against the Buddha, not apply aptly to him? He believes in a discriminatory social system, debars the fourth Varna (Shudra) from acquiring knowledge, favours the elites and shows insensitivity towards the Shudra, though all this goes against his professed philosophy of Advaita–monism. When all are Brahman then what is the meaning of Shudra and Dvija? Here again the Shankarites play the game of hide and seek for face-saving in the name of empirical and ultimate. Question arises, did Shankara all the time remain entrapped in this quagmire of empirical and ultimate? Why did he remain attached to those Shastras that are ignorance for him? Did he remain all the time ignorant that he is quoting them on every page of the Brahma-Sutra Bhashya? Advaita and Shudra are mutually

exclusive things : If Advaita is true, there cannot be a Shudra, if Shudra is there Advaita cannot be there. You cannot eat the cake and have it. But Shankara wants to have both of them and that makes his philosophy a social cancer. After pouring lac or lead in the ears of the Shudra who has heard the recitation of the Vedas, you cannot convince the civilized world of your good intentions because after dealing with the Shudra in the above-mentioned way you forfeit your right to speak for the good of humanity. When the Shudra has suffered in the Shankarian and Shastrian inferno, all the wild talk of 'all are Brahma', of Advaita, is useless and out of place. What is done to the Shudra in the Shankara's philosophy is today a punishable crime and so anti-Constitutional misdeed.

Shankara deviates from the so-called Advaita, in another sense also. He is singing songs of different gods as well and in this way preaches Bhakti also. Bhakti is good or bad, we do not want to discuss that here. What we want to underline is this : Advaita means monism, i.e. man and Brahman (God) are one and the same thing : अहं ब्रह्मास्मि (I (soul) am (is) Brahma); तत्त्वमसि (you are that i.e. your soul is Brahma). That being so, there is no scope for a person to worship this or that god, because he himself is the worshipper and the worshipped. That is what he declares अहं ब्रह्मास्मि, तत्त्वमसि. These are foundational principles of Advaita Vedanta and Shankara has quoted them in his books as basis of his philosophy.

On the contrary, Bhakti is predicated on the assumption that there are various gods–an imagined variety of species–and they are different from mankind. The latter should worship the former. If in fact there is Advaita, then it is a crime to persuade the people to do Bhakti because you are misguiding them and pushing them towards the pit of ignorance.

Bhakti and Advaita cannot co-exist philosophically. He is either himself a confused person or he wants to confuse others with some ulterior motive[1] who sells both of them i.e. Bhakti and Advaita.

Shankara Digvijaya

The devotees of Shankara have written an epic namely Shankara-digvijaya, in which the activities of the hero (Shankara) are presented. A perusal of the book can throw flood of light on his scholarship, the depth of his philosophy, and the way he treated those who happened to differ with him ideologically.

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1. *Cf. विमुह्येयुरिमाः प्रजा इति. This is what Shankara has said about the Buddha.*

When two scholars of different schools of thought used to sit in the ancient India, they generally debated their stands. This debate was called Shastrartha (discussion on the meanings or implications of their principles). That discussion was based on their respective books or principles. That was a way to show to each other the shortages and limitations of their stands. That also honed their intellect. They were more knowledgeable than before the discussion. These discussions also helped them to prune and improve their theories. This dialectical approach or method was the forte of Indian philosophy. That is why in every darshana, we find this type of discussion. Open any Bhashya or tika of any darshana you will find all this. Therefore there is this unique word i.e. Shastrartha.

Shastrartha was an intellectual exercise where subtle points of darshanas were debated. There were all scholars, who participated and watched all that. But when Shankara starts on a digvijaya (tour to win all the directions, all the areas) he is accompanied by King Sudhanva, (with his army) and thousands of his followers–अथ शिष्यवरैर्युतः सहस्त्रैरनुयातः स सुधन्वना राज्ञा, कुकभो विजिगीषुः (शंकरदिग्विजय, 15/1).

All this seems as if it is a political campaign or halla bol or mob going to lynch. The word Shastrartha is conspicious by its absence. Instead, a political word is used–विजिगीषुः (desirous of victory). That is why the book has the title which is neither philosophical nor biographical but purely political : digvijaya (conquering all the directions). Digvijaya is a political concept which is expansionist. Expansionist forces attack, nor discuss and crush others–the target of their attack.

When Krakacha, a Kapalika, was explaining the secrets of his Agama in the debate, king Sudhanva called him a coward and with the help of his men (soliders) drove him away : इति जल्पति भैरवागमानां हृदयं कापुरुषेति तं विनिन्द्य, निरवासयदात्मवित् समाजात् पुरुषैः स्वैरधिकारिभिः सुधन्वा. (शं.दि. 15/15)

When he, the Kapalika, came back with his men because he was insulted without any reason, the king put on his mail, and seated in his chariot, resisted the approaching Kapalikla with his bow and arrows : तद् द्रुतमालोक्य महारथः सुधन्वा, कुपितः कवची रथी निषंगी धनुरादाय मयौ शरान् विमुंचन् (शं.दि. 15/18)

Then Shankara uttered mystic syllable 'Hung' and reduced to ashes those Kapalikas. Simultaneously, the king also spread the

earth with a carpet formed of the heads of those Kapalikas यतिराट् स चकार भस्मसान्निजहुंकारभुवाऽग्निना क्षणेन. 21 नृपतिश्च शरैः सुवर्णपुंखैर्विनिकृत्तैः प्रतिपक्षवक्त्रपद्मैः, रणरंगभुवं सहस्रसंघैः समलंकृत्य मुदाऽगमन्मुनीन्द्रम्. (शं.दि. 15/21-22)

Is it debate? What the king has to do with all what Shankara preached? Is it not शस्त्रार्थ (exchange of weapons), instead of शास्त्रार्थ (exchange of ideas)? Is not it a political battle than a philosophical debate?

As Shankara proceeds, battle drums are beaten. No soomer was the drums beaten, than the atheistic Charvakas took to their heels; the followers of Kanada (i.e. those who accepted the philosophy of Vaisheshika darshana) lost sight of their way, became blind of one eye, in the cloud of dust raised by the army of Sudhanva; so also, the followers of Sankhya darshana and that of Patanjali's Yoga darshana ran helter-skelter :

यत्राऽऽरम्भजकाहलाकलकलैर्लोकायतो विद्रुतः, काणाः काणभुजस्तु सैन्यरजसा सांख्यैर्धृताऽसांख्यधीः, युद्ध्वा तेषु पलायितेषु सहसा योगाः सहैवाद्रवन. (शं.दि. 15/167)

The resounding drum-beat announcing the victory of shankara over Mandana had blown like a fierce wind through the forest of the ears of numerous atheistical sophists; and then lit up a conflagration that became a fierce and roaring forest fire, consuming all the wild growth of perverse doctrines therein: उच्चण्डे पणबन्धबन्धुरतरे वाचंयमक्ष्मापतेः पूर्वं मण्डनखण्डने समुदभूद्यो डिण्डिभाडम्बरः, जाताः शब्दपरम्परास्तत इमा पाखंडदुर्वादिनामद्य श्रोत्रतटाखीषु दधते दावानलज्वालताम्. (शं.दि. 15/168)

The Buddhists ran away pell-mell when confronted by him (Shankara) in controversy; the followers of kanad took shelter in obscure corners; the disciples of Gautam (the author of Nyaya-darshana) dissolved in darkness; the sect of Kapila (author of Shankhya philosophy) lost all its glamour; and the followers of Panajali surrendered to him with hands in salutation : बुद्धो युद्धसमुद्यतः किल पुनः स्थित्वा क्षणाद् विद्रुतः, कोणे द्राक्कणभुग्व्यलीयत, तमःस्तोभावृतो गौतमः. भग्नोऽसौ कपिलः पलायतः ततः पातंजलाश्चांजलिं चक्रुः. (शं.दि. 15/169)

Some of the controvesial antagonists like the followers of Kanada were pulled by hand by him and were madetosit in his group; while the atheistic charvakas were killed with force; some were put in jail for a long time–हस्तग्राहं गृहीताः कतिचन समरे वैदिका वादियोधाः काणादाद्याः, परे तु प्रसभमभिहता हन्त लोकायताद्याः. गाढं बन्दीकृतास्ते सुचिरम्. (शं.दि. 15/170)

These are the glimpses taken from the Shankara-digvijaya. They show how Shankara dealt with those who differed with him. He had king Sudhanva and his army with him in addition to thousands of his followers. When he goes, battle drums are also beaten. Some people are beaten to death, some others are put in jail. He could do so, because king Sudhanva & his army were there to execute his orders.

All of it was fascistic in nature. Difference of opinion was settled by state force, all were forced to fall in line with him. No freedom of thought and expression was allowed. There is nothing to boast of. One feels ashamed when reads all that. That is why the English translator of the book, changes meanings of the word or sometimes omits the words in translation used in the original text.

It is said that, Advaita is the culmination of thought and that is the great contribution of Shankara to Indian philosophy.

That is totally wrong historically, because Advaita was there in Indian thought centuries before Shankara was born. We find Advaita in older Upanishads, along with Dvaita, etc.

Even Buddha knows and accepts this advaitavada and preaches it in the light of his own experience (...) Buddha identifies the Absolute with Nirvana and uses the same or similar epithets for it which the Upanishads use for Brahma or atma which is identified with Moksha. He takes Avidya, the beginningless cosmic Ignorance as the root-cause of phenomenal existence and suffering. He believes that thought is fraught with inherent contradictions and cannot reveal the Real which can he realised only through immediate spiritual experience. He prefers the negative dialectic for indirectly pointing to the inexpressible Real. For him silence is the language of the real.[1]

The Madhyamika is also Advaitavadi. All the important aspects of Buddha's advaitavada indicated above have been faithfully and systematically developed by the Madhyamika in his philosophy. Like Buddha, he emphasises that the Absolute is transcentent to thought and can be realised only by immediate non-dual supra-relational experience called Bodhi or Prajnaparamita and identified with Nirvana.[2]

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1. *Chandradhar Sharma, The Advaita Tradition in Indian Philosophy, pp. 2-3.*
2. *Ibid, p. 3*

The earlier Vijnanavada firmly clings to Advaitavada from the ultimate standpoint. (...) This non-dual vijnana is realised in the immediate spiritual experience.[1]

Acharya Gaudapada's Karika on the Mandukya Upanishad is the first systematic treatise on Advaita Vedanta which is available to us.[2]

Gaudapada was the guru of the guru of Shankara, i.e. the grand-guru (dada guru). That being so, how can Shankara be the originator of Advaita? How can the Advaita be his contribution to the Indian philosophy?

Keeping all in view, one is constrained to say that Shankara lacks those qualities which make one philosopher. How can he be accepted as representing the culmination of India philosophy?

Atheism does not believe in the life after death. Some people naturally ask : then why should man lead a disciplined life, instead of a wayward life? The idea of eternal soul inculcates the notion that man will get reward in the hereafter so he should lead a disciplined life.

Buddha says that the idea of eternal soul is a mithya drishti (wrong philosophy). It makes a man wayward. Atheism and Buddhism reject the idea of an eternal soul. It is imperative for them to lead a good and disciplined life, because they know that one does not get life repeatedly. It is a one time affair. So a man should try his best to live this life in a good manner. Man should not create unnecessary problems for himself and others. If a man steals, others will steal his belongings. That would not create a congenial atmosphere. To lead a food life man will have to be self-disciplined so that this short span of life is led in a good way. To be good or self-disciplined has its own reward and it does not have anything to do with the hereafter.

Good or bad, such-like qualities have a meaning only in the society of human beings who have created them. For the natural phenomena these qualities have no meaning. They are neutral to what we call good or bad. No natural phenomena can understand human concepts. Therefore, there is no natural mechanism for rewarding or punishing. In fact rewarding or punishing too is unknown to nature, because these are human concepts. That being so, an atheist or a Buddhist knows that

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1. *Ibid, pp. 4-5*
2. *Ibid, p. 5*

to be good is in the long term beneficial for him and the society at large and it has its own reward : if you lead a good life in a good society, that is the *summum bonum*. It is futile to do good-deeds in the hope of getting reward in the hereafter. So atheists and Buddhists emphasise self-discipline for man in this world. This currency becomes only a piece of waste paper after the disintegration of the temporary combination of the elements, that causes this human body.

Tailpiece : The followers of Shankara use divine ploy to make his philosophy acceptable as under :

The Ḍiṇḍima commentary on the Madhaviya Shankara-Vijay (p. 529; Anandashram Press 1915), and the Shankarabhyudayam (8th Sarga, Shlokas 87-88) state that a number of scholars and a large number of people gathered at the temple when Shankara worshipped Shri Mahalinga. The works add that when Shankara finished his prayer, all those assembled saw a divine form with the right hand raised emerging out of the Linga and also at the same time heard the words 'Satyam Advaitam', uttered thrice up above in the air. It is said that all those gathered there bowed before the linga and then before Shankara, whereupon the divine personality disappeared into the Linga. (A. Kuppuswami, Shri Bhagavatpada Shankaracharya, p. 85-86, Chowkhamba, Varanasi).

What Atheists Don't Say

There are many books–some revered, some reviled, some revealed and some concealed. They say such things, as the atheists never say because they love peace, they believe in intellucal freedom, they give importance to human relations, they do not preach hatred for this or that language, religion, etc.

Contrary to them, the books say as under :

* ब्राह्मणो नावैदिकमधीयीत. (छान्दोग्य उप. 8/8).

A Brahmana should not study a book which is not Vedic i.e. which is not following Vedic teachings.

* न वदेद् यावनीं भाषां प्राणैः कण्ठगतैरपि,
  हस्तिना ताड्यमानोऽपि न गच्छेज्जैनमन्दिरम्.

(भविष्य पुराण, प्रतिसर्ग पर्व 2, खं. 3, अ. 28, श्लोक 53)

One should not speak the Yavani language i.e. the language of the Yavans/Muslims, even under pain of death. Likewise, one should not enter a Jain temple even if an elephant is following you to attack. You should prefer death to speaking the Yavani language and and entering the Jain temple.

* अपि चेत् सुदुराचारो भजते मामनन्यभाक्,
  साधुरेव स मन्तव्यः सम्यग्व्यवसितो हि सः. गीता 9/30

Even if a man of very bad conduct (सुदुराचारः) worships 'me' with one-pointed devotion, he is to be considered verily good (साधुः), for he has resolved rightly.

* हैतुकान् वाङ्मात्रेणापि नार्चयेत्. मनु 4/30

Do not show respect even in words to those who argue.

* बौद्धान् पाशुपतांश्च लोकायतिकनास्तिकान्.
  विकर्मस्थान् द्विजान् स्पृष्ट्वा सचैलो जलमाविशेत्.

(अपरार्क, पृ. 923; स्मृतिचन्द्रिका 1, पृ. 118; मिताक्षरा (याज्ञवल्क्य स्मृति 3/30) में ब्रह्माण्ड पुराण से उद्धृत; वृद्धहारीत, 9/359, 363-64; शांतिपर्व (महाभारत) 76/6.)

If a man touches the Buddhists, the Pashupatas, the Jains, the Lokayatas, the followers of Kapila and the Brahmana living by condemned actions, he has to purify himself by bathing with clothes on.

* Go not into the way the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not : But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. New Testament, Matthew, 10/5-6.
* Think not that I am come to send peace on earth : I came not to send peace, but a sword. Ibid, 10/34.
* I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. Ibid, 10/35-36.
* He that loveth father or mother more than me (Jesus) is not worthy of me : and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me. Ibid, 10/37.
* It is not fit for the Prophet and those who believe that they should ask forgiveness for the polytheists, even though they should be near relatives, after it has become clear to them they are inmates of the flaming fire. Quran, 9/113.
* And Ibrahim asking forgiveness for his sire was only owing to a promise which he had made to him; but when it became clear to him that he was an enemy of Allah, he declared himself to be clear of him. Quran, 9/114.
* O you who believe! Take not as supporters and helpers your fathers and your brothers, if they prefer disbelief to Belief. And whoever of you does so, then he is one of the wrongdoers. Quran, 9/23.
* But when the sacred months expire slay those who associate others with Allah in his divinity wherever you find them, and lie in wait for them. Quran 9/5.
* .Keep on fighting against them until mischief ends and the way prescribed by Allah prevails. Quran 2/193.

Those who say that they wish well-being of the world, their claims can be taken only with a pinch of salt, because when it is said "Dharma ki jeet ho", then it is also said "Adharma ka nash ho". What is adharma? If you consider not eating beef is dharma, then it is clear that beef eating is adharma. Beef-eaters are in crores in the world. When you

say 'adharma ka nash ho', then you wish destruction of those crores of people. Likewise, when not eating pork is dharma, then the crores of people all over the world become adharma who eat pork. Again, adharma ka nash means the ruination of those crores of people. That being so, how are they well-wishers of the world, as claimed by them?

There are others who say : Sarvat ka bhala. Ade so Jhade. We wish the well being of all, but if one would not fall in line with, he will be thrashed or crushed.

Some Short Notes

यतो कृष्णस्ततो जयः

This statement is made by such a Pandita who does not know the language fully. That is why he writes यतो instead of यतः because there is no rule according to which Sandhi could be here.

Secondly, the statement was made after the war, not before. What has happened, has been presented as a principle. Bogus sentence which proves nothing.

यतो धर्मस्ततो जयः

It means that side wins which has dharma on its side. In other words, jo jita vahi sikander i.e. dharma is with that side which wins.

According to this principle, when the Kauravas won the game of dice, dharma was with them. So, it is nonsensical propaganda to say that they won fraudulently. When the Turks, Mughals won in the medieval period who destroyed Hindu Temples, broke the idols of Hindu gods, then according to this principle, they were doing no a-dharma, because they were winning, so dharma was on their side. So it is forsooth not proper to condemn them as irreligious or anti-religious people.

I think this principle was enunciated to cover up the misdeeds of Pandavas–their killing of Grandfather Bhishma, Guru Drona, Duryodhana and Karna violating the established rules of warfaire–by a certain sycophant. But that not only misfires in other cases but also boomerangs. So that is a bogus principle.

धर्मादर्थो धर्मात्कामः

It means : One should get money from Dharma and also one should get Kama (desire fulfillment and sexual gratification) from Dharma.

This principle is wrong because it is money that facilitates dharma, not vice versa. This has been said by Bhima in the Mahabharata :

धर्मश्चार्थेन महता शक्यो राजन् निषेवितुम् (वनपर्व, 33/48).

If one has money, he can do sacrifice, can go on pilgrimage, can donate, can help the poor, etc; but in case one is a pauper, he would beg his food from others. Is the begging dharma? A pauper can only do this dharma! So, it is not proper to say that one should get money from dharma.

As dharma is no source of money, so it is no source of kama. Dharma is neither a mint nor a brothel.

स्वस्य च प्रियमात्मनः (मनु. 2/12)

What is Dharma? Manu says that the Vedas, the sacred tradition, the customs of virtuous men and one's own pleasure, they declare to be visibly the fourfold definition of dharma :

वेदः स्मृतिः सदाचारः स्वस्य च प्रियमात्मनः,

एतच्चतुर्विधं प्राहुः साक्षाद् धर्मस्य लक्षणम्. (मनु. 2/12)

To include in the definition of dharma what is 'one's own pleasure' is strange. How can that be part of dharma? I think that was necessitated by the Charvakian philosophy. The Charvakas stressed the point that self-inflicted torture in this or that form cannot be the aim of life and dharma. Aim of life is to enjoy it in a healthy way. This doctrine the religionists could not counter. So they finally succumbed to Charvaka. The Manusmriti here does the same. Despite, the Veda, Smriti, etc., to give place in the definition of 'one's own pleasure' is an indelible stamp of Charvaka on the Vedic/Hindu dharma of the Manusmriti.

सत्त्वसंशुद्धिः (Gita 16/1)

In the Gita, there is description of the Divine Estate. In the first version of the chapter 16, it talks of सत्त्वसंशुद्धिः which is translated as 'purity of heart'. Shankara in his commentary on Gita, explaining the word writes–सत्त्वस्य अन्तःकरणस्य संशुद्धिः i.e. purity of Antahkarana.

To translate it in English as purity of heart, is not correct because heart is neither Antahkarana nor does it get pure or impure because heart is a hollow muscular organ that pumps the blood through the circulatory system by rhythmic contraction and relaxation. It does not think. Purity or impurity does not apply to this organ. So it is wrong to attribute purity, impurity or emotions to this organ. Those who are reeling under pre-modern ignorance, only they attribute all that to heart. Therefore 'the purity of heart' is an inanity

–1) सूक्ष्मो हि भगवान् धर्मः

–2) धर्मस्य तत्त्वं निहितं गुहायाम्.

It means (1) Dharma is very subtle; (2) the essence of dharma is concealed in a dark cavern.

If dharma is meant for everyone, for the man in the street, for a common man, then it can neither be so subtle nor can its essence be concealed in a dark cavern. If it is a very subtle thing the essence of which is concealed in a dark cavern, then obviously it is not a thing for every one, it may be a thing belonging to the rulers or/and priests and others who exploit the people in its name.

When Draupadi was brought to the court of the Kauravas, she asked some questions. When others failed to answer, she addressed Bhishma and demanded a reply from him who was pretending in that age as the knower of dharma. That is why he was going on speaking for hours daily when he was on his death-bed on the battle field. Hundreds of pages of the Mahabharata are filled with what he supposedly spoke then. But when Draupadi put a question directly to him whether Yudhishthira had the right to stake her when he had already become a slave of the Kaurawas, Bhishma tried to avoid replying and said : न धर्मसौक्ष्म्यात्सुभगे विवेक्तुं शक्नोमि ते प्रश्नमिमं यथावत् (महाभारत, सभापर्व) i.e. I cannot answer your question because dharma is a very subtle thing.

The man who waxes eloquent on every topic without pause on his death-bed on the battle-field, how can he say so in the court when he is comfortably placed on his seat and is completely healthy? Reason behind his avoidance is underlined by Yudhishthira as under :

समा यद्यपि भीष्मस्य वृत्तिरस्मासु तेषु च,
द्रोणस्य च महाबाहो कृपस्य च महात्मनः. 15
अवश्यं राजपिण्डस्तैर्निर्वेश्य इति मे मतिः,
तस्मात् त्यक्ष्यन्ति संग्रामे प्राणानपि सुदुस्त्यजान्. 16

Though Bhishma, Drona and Kripa equally love us and them; yet they shall give up even their dear lives for Duryodhana because they *are eating the bread given by him*. They shall pay the price when there is war by siding with him.

Bhishma was eating the bread given by Duryodhana and enjoying the honour in the Court given by him, so he did not answer the question

and recused himself from answering in the above-said way : dharma is very subtle, etc. On the battle field when he was waxing eloquent on every topic without pause, then there was no such bar, so he went on to say whatever came to his mind, if really he is the author of those long chapters of the Mahabharata attributed to him.

Dharma becomes subtle, forsooth, when you are to save your skin, to protect your self-interest or when you are to exploit a victim; otherwise there is no subtlety and nothing is concealed in any dark cavern.

The Mahabharata is not an impartial epic. In the 12th century epic namely Naishadha Charitam, it is said :

पंडितः पाण्डवानां स व्यासश्चाटुपटुः कविः,
निनिंद तेषु निन्दत्सु स्तुवत्सु स्तुतवान्न किम्. (नैषधचरित 17/65)

Vyasa, that pandita of Pandavas, is a great sycophant poet. He praises those whom they praise and condemns those whom they condemn.

That is to say : to please the Pandavas he follows them, not critically assesses them impartially.

When someone tries to critically evaluate them or their guide, it is said that they followed dharma and dharma is a very subtle thing.

When dharma is meant for everyone, why is the dharma beyond the reach of everyone? Why some people–priests, rulers etc.–claim to be the custodians and monopolists of dharma? They knowingly make religion somewhat ambiguous and mysterious. It is made ever-elusive. They make dharma 'flexible' only to make it fall in line with their view, self-interest and ego. That has repelled people from the institutionalized religion in every age and in every country. Charvaka, too, opposes religion, because of this. He refuses to give contract (theka) to this or that priest–religious professional.

Arthashastra and Charvaka

The division of Darshanas into atheistic and theistic is of recent origin. In the old compendia such as shad-darshana-samuchchaya (8th century CE), Sarva-darshana-sangrah (14th century CE) etc there is no division into Aastika-Nastika. Those compendia are silent on this point as it carries no weight with them.

In the ancient literature, the only division that is available is found in the Arthashastra of Kautilya which is as under :

आन्वीक्षकी त्रयी वार्ता दण्डनीतिश्चेति विद्याः. त्रयी वार्ता दण्डनीतिश्चेति मानवाः, त्रयीविशेषो ह्यान्वीक्षकीति. वार्ता दण्डनीतिश्चेति बार्हस्पत्याः, संवरणमात्रं हि त्रयी लोकयात्राविद इति. दण्डनीतिरेका विद्येत्यौशनसाः, तस्यां हि सर्वविद्यारम्भाः प्रतिबद्धा इति. चतस्र एव विद्या इति कौटिल्यः, ताभिर्धर्मार्थौ यद्विद्यात्तद्विद्यानां विद्यात्वम्. (अर्थशास्त्र अधिकरण 1, अध्याय 1, 1-9)

The branches of learning are–Logic; three Vedas (trayi); agriculture, cattle-raising and trade (collectively called varta) and the teachnique of ruling (dandaniti). According to the Manavas, there are only three branches of learning–Vedas, Varta and dandaniti; because logic is only a special branch of Vedic lore. According to the followers of **Brihaspati**, they are only two (not four or three) : Varta and dandaniti; because Vedic lore is only a kind of cloak (Samvarana) for those who are wise in the ways of worldly life. According to the followers of **Ushanas**, there is only one branch of learning, namely, Dandaniti, because the success of various efforts put according to all the branches of learning is rooted in it. However, **Kautilya** says that the branches are four and only four : Logic, Trayi, Varta and Dandaniti.

Then Kautilya explains the four branches, one by one :

सांख्यं योगो लोकायतं चेत्यान्वीक्षकी; धर्माधर्मौ त्रय्याम्;
अर्थानर्थौ वार्तायाम्, नयापनयौ दण्डनीत्याम्. (Ibid)

Logic-based philosophy (anvikshaki), is represented by the following three : Samkhya, Yoga and Lokayata (Charvakism); dharma and adharma are dealt with in trayi; money and non-money matters

are dealt with in Varta and Justice and non-justice are dealt with in Dandaniti.

Then Kautilya praises the Anvikshaki in these words :

बलाबले चैतासां हेतुभिरन्वीक्षमाणा लोकस्योपकरोति, व्यसनेऽभ्युदये च बुद्धिमवस्थापयति, प्रज्ञावाक्यक्रियावैशारद्यं च करोति.

प्रदीपः सर्वविद्यानामुपायः सर्वकर्मणाम्
आश्रयः सर्वधर्माणां शश्वदान्वीक्षकी मता. (Ibid)

Logic, by critically examining with the means of proper arguments (hetu) the relative strength and weakness of all those, benefits the people; keeps the thinking steady both in calamities and prosperities, and also brings about expertness in knowledge, speech and actions.

Logic is ever accepted to be the lamp of all the branches of learning, the means for all kinds of activities and the basis of all virtues.

But the idealists, priests and others say :

भवेत्पंडितमानी च ब्राह्मणो वेदनिन्दकः
आन्वीक्षिकं तर्कविद्यामनुरक्तो निरर्थिकाम्. (महाभारत, अनुशासन पर्व 37/12)

The Brahmana who loves Anvikshaki which is useless, thinks himself a great scholar and he condemns the Vedas.

So the priests etc. are always afraid of Anvikshaki.

This quotation of Kautilya is important from many angles. It recognises only three darshanas namely Sankhya, Yoga and Lokayata. The first and the last i.e. Sankhya and Lokayata are godless and both of them give importance to Nature. Both of them are materialistic. Though the Sankhya of the Sankhya karika is semi-materialistic, it seems prior to the Karika, Sankhya was totally materialistic. Yoga darshana was also recognised as it also did not believe in the transcendental god. This darshana was needed for the ruler as the Yogis were adept in creating miracles with the sleight of hand or chemicals, etc. That is why the word yoga also means deception in Sanskrit. Manu uses the word yoga is this sense in the following verse :

योगाधमनविक्रीतं योगदानप्रतिग्रहम्
यत्र वाऽप्युपधिं पश्येत्तत्सर्वं विनिवर्तयेत्. मनु. 8/165

Whatever is fradulently mortgaged, sold, given or donated, or accepted, all that is invalid.

Kautilya does not refer to Buddhism and Jainism. It seems he ignored them owing to their asceticism. He was talking in the wordly sense and these two creeds were aworldly. The world they needed only when alms were required. At all other times world was nowhere for those unattached people. For Kautilya they had no use. So he ignored them as if they were not there. That also applies to other ascetics–Vedantins etc. They too have been omitted.

Despite all that, it pains not to see them mentioned in the Arthashastra!

Kautilya has by giving the pride of place to Lokayata i.e. Charvaka, and throwing (some of) the darshanas of the idealists to wolves, slapped the face of those who blather on about Lokayata/Charvaka and criticise uncharitably blinded by the so-called spiritual hubris.

Draupadi : A Charvakian?

When the Pandavas were undergoing exile in forests, Draupadi said to Yudhishthira, among other things, as under :

न मातृपितृवद् राजन् धाता भूतेषु वर्तते,
दोषादिव प्रवृत्तोऽयं यथायमितरो जनः. (महाभारत, वनपर्व 30/38)

O king, I think god does not treat all the creatures with love and mercy as parents (mother-father) treat their children. It seems that god deals with creatures as people, other than parents, deal with them rudely.

आर्याञ्छीलवतो दृष्ट्वा ह्रीमतोवृत्तिकर्शितान्,
अनार्यान् सुखिनश्चैव विह्वलामीव चिन्तया. (30/39)

Because good, virtuous and bashful people are without livelihood and undergoing sufferings, while bad people are happy; seeing this all, my above-said thinking gets stronger and I am worried.

तवेमामापदं दृष्ट्वा समृद्धिं च सुयोधने,[1]
धातारं गर्हये पार्थ विषमं योऽनुपश्यति. (30/40)

O Partha, when I see you in distress and poverty, and see Suyodhana in prosperity, I condemn god. He sees people with a discriminating eye : he gives sorrow & pain to the good people, and happiness and prosperity to bad people. He does not think properly.

आर्यशास्त्रातिगे क्रूरे लुब्धे धर्मापचायिनि,
धार्तराष्ट्रे श्रियं दत्त्वा धाता किं फलमश्नुते. (30/41)

What good will get god who has given prosperity to the son of Dhritarashtra, who is violative of Shastras, cruel, greedy and harmful to dharma?

कर्म चेत् कृतमन्वेति कर्तारं नान्यमृच्छति,
कर्मणा तेन पापेन लिप्यते नूनमीश्वरः. (30/42)

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1. *The real name of the man known as Duryodhana seems Suyodhana, and that is found here and many other places in the Mahabharata. It seems, the writer or copiers of the book changed Suyodhana to Duryodhana as he or they were biased.*

If karma once done follow the doer, then god shall get contaminated by this karma of his.

अथ कर्म कृतं पापं न चेत् कर्तारमृच्छति,
कारणं बलमेवेह जनाञ्छोचामि दुर्बलान्. (30/43)

If owing to his might, the doer does not get punished by god for the Pap (bad deed) done by him, then I am worried for the common man who is weak–not mighty like him.

After hearing all this Yudhishthra has no reply. He does not logically contradict what has been said. In stead he runs to declare her an Atheist :

उक्तं तच्छुतमस्माभिर्नास्तिक्यं तु प्रभाषसे. (32/1)

I have heard what you have said. You are speaking of Atheism.

धर्मो यस्याभिशंक्यः स्यादार्षं वा दुर्बलात्मनः,
वेदाच्छूद्र इवापेयात् स लोकादजरामरात्. (31/8)

He who suspects dharma or who disbelieves the Shastras deprives himself of heaven, as the Shudra deprives of the Vedas.

पापीयान् स हि शूद्रेभ्यस्तस्करेभ्यो विशिष्यते
शास्त्रातिगो मन्दबुद्धिर्यो धर्ममभिशंकते. (31/10)

That fool who violates the Shastras and raises doubt regarding Dharma, he is more sinner than the Shudras and thieves.

न फलदर्शनाद् धर्मः शंकितव्यो न देवताः,
यष्टव्यं च प्रयत्नेन दातव्यं चानसूयता. (31/38).

If the fruits of deeds done are not seen, one should not disbelieve dharma and the gods. One should go on performing sacrifices and donating.

तस्मात् ते संशयः कृष्णे नीहार इव नश्यतु,
व्यवस्य सर्वमस्तीति नास्तिकयं भावभुत्सृज. (31/40)

O Krishne, Everything is right and true, think thus and your disbelieve should disappear like fog. You eschew your these atheistic ideas.

Here ends the 2nd chapter, i.e. chapter 31. Yudhishthira has no reply to the points raises by Draupadi. He simply objurgates her to abandon the ideas which are atheistic. Instead of any counter argument, he teaches her theism, idealism. Everyone who raises a question or refuses to tread the beaten track is dubbed an atheist.

We do not want to comment on Yudhishthira but would like to mention some sentences of Bhima's reaction.

भवान् धर्मो धर्म इति सततं व्रतकर्शितः,
कच्चिद् राजन् न निर्वेदादापन्नः क्लीबजीविकाम्. (33/13)

O king, you alway perform vratas and say 'this is dharma' 'that is dharma' I am afraid that you are discouraged owing to reclusion and leading a life of impotents.

धर्मश्चार्थेन महता शक्यो राजन् निषेवितुम् (33/48)

Dharma is repeatedly referred to by you. But that dharma can be followed only if you have a lot of money.

श्रोत्रियस्येव ते राजन् मन्दकस्याविपश्चितः,
अनुवाकहता बुद्धिर्नैषा तत्त्वार्थदर्शिनी. (36/19)

Oh King, your intellect has destroyed as the intellect of the slow-witted shrotriyas (Veda-pathis) gets destroyed who parrot the words of the Vedas without knowing their meanings, so you do not understand the reality.

Yudhishthira says only this much to Bhima–I do not mind what you say Bhima. I think what has happened that was ordained to happen : न ते वाचो भीमसेनाभ्यसूये, मन्ये तथा तद् भवितव्यमासीत्.

This is official version of the dialogue of an 'Atheist' and a theist. Bhima, Draupadi, etc. are not atheists. They are believing theists. What they say is natural under the circumstances. Everyone does so in life, despite their believing in dharma. It means what the atheists say is not extraordinary. They simply say what ordinary persons say. In this way they are common people and what they say is the talk of the common people (Lokayatas). Only those people run away from their talk who have their own axes to grind or who have no answer to the questions raised.

Causality : Some Principles Revisited.

As the idealists repeatedly refer to the pre-Purandar era of Anumana only to condemn the Charvakas, so that repeatedly refer to the era when they believed only in Svabhava-Vada and did not believe in causality.

There was a time when the Charvakas like David Hume[1] of the 18th century used to think that the need for accepting a cause lies only in the habit of connecting two events in thought which happen to be found conjunctive in a large number of instances. Hume holds that causal relation is nothing but a subjective construction. There are Western philosophers who like Hume, do not accept the principle of causality.

What the Charvakas said thousands of years ago is repeated by Hume in the modern age; but no one barks at him as ferociously as they bark at Charvaka.

I think the Charvakas were not static. They progressed and there was change in their stand as there was in the case of Anumana. But the idealists, despite that, keep on parroting their earlier stand, knowingly suppressing the changed views. Likewise, I pressume, they are doing in this case, though due to lack of literature one cannot quote the relevent portion.

When the Charvakas say that red colour is produced by the combination of betel leaf, arecanut and lime, they are undeniably underlining the causality. They know which combination can produce redness. Critics knowingly turn a blind eye to this fact. They know that if they admit that the Charvakas accept causality, they would find nothing to critise them. Their compulsion to critise causes blindness towards the ground reality.

The Charvakas are here aware of the qualitative change as well. When they say from the non-intoxicating ingredients emerges intoxcation then also they recognise causality and the qualitative change.

The refusal to accept all this is intellectual dishonesty of pious spiritualists.

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1. *See, David Hume, An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding, Section VII, Part II, New York, 1955.*

Anumana

In the case of **Anumana**, the opponents talked of vyapti (the relation between the probans and the probandum not vitiated by any condition i.e. upadhi), but the Charvakas say that Vyapti cannot be obtained. Though fire is attended by smoke, there may be, at some other place and at some other time some condition which vitiates the vyapti between the probans and the probandum. So inference is always vitiated by the doubt as to the possible presence of 'upadhi' at another place and at another time which may render it invalid.

Charvaka is not talking of utopia. We have been saying since centuries that where there is oxygen, there is life or where there is no oxygen, there is no life. But now they have discovered life without oxygen. On Feb 28, 2020, there was news in the world press that 'scientists have found the first animal that does not need oxygen to live. The organism a parasite called Henneguya salminilcola that is distantly related to coral and Jellyfish. It has evolved to survive without needing oxygen for energy.

Now the premise that life depends on oxygen has proved wrong technically, because life can be there without oxygen as well.

Self

The Charvakas say that Consciousness is produced in the body out of the four elements, viz. earth, water, fire and air in the same way as the red colour is produced from the combination of betel, arecanut and lime. That is very import, because the Charvakas knew or recongised the qualitative change, which others failed to note. Their opponents could not understand the concept of qualitative change, so they were beating about the bush.

Consciousness is a brain-centred phenomenon. A team of researchers has found an "engine of consciousness" in the brain-a region where, in monkeys, even a little jump start will make them wake up from anesthesia. The region is known as the **central lateral thalamus**. The location may differ but this is a fact that consciousness is inseparable from the brain in the sense that without brain consciousness cannot be there. Even impared brain lacks consciousness. When a man's brain gets damaged he falls unconscious. Certain drugs can also create such

a situation, for example anesthesia which is made of nitrousoxide, Isoflurane, Sevoflurane, and desflurane.

A man, somebody, is that which is conscious owing to the temporary combination of certain parts of refined matter. The dead is a 'dead', not body, because it lacks the required combination of those parts of matter which make a body a body, the inseprable quality of which is consciousness. When that combination in impared naturally or by any extrenous cause, the result is permanent absence of consciousness. This situation is called, in short, death and the body becomes a dead body. If betel, arecanut and lime are not combined in a certain proportion, red colour would not appear. So is with consciousness.

Svabhava-Vada

In the age of Buddha almost all the tendencies could culminate in the Charvakian atheism, says Dr. Bharat Singh[1] Upadhyay. He further says that the Charvakian thought is very old. It seems it originated in the Vedic period itself when the Vedik Karmakanda got vitiated. It rose as a reaction to that. Madhavacharya says that the ideas of Charvaka are very difficult to annihilate. He is right because many scholars of Veda etc, devotees, and even religious preachers in their personal lives are seen more interested in material thought than the spiritual matters, says Upadhyaya. He says that Buddha, owing to the Anatmavada, can be said to haved reached near materialism. According to Rahul Sankrityayan, the great Buddhist scholar, Buddha preached for 45 years against God, atma, caste, book (Veda) and many other things which were against Materialism. So he arrived at the border of materialism.

He says that owing to the authors of Lankavatara Sutra, Bodhicharyavatara and the declaration of Dharmakirti to the effect that to accept the authority of Vedas; to accept a creator of the world; to think religious act in bathing; to take pride in one's caste and to undergo torture for removing the sins–these are the signs of those who are fools; it has been established as a tradition in Indian philosophy that the Buddhists are also atheists like the Charvakas and some people think them a branch of the Charvakas. To substantiate this he quotes some lines of a book in Sankrit quoted by Swami Dayananda Saraswati in the 12th chapter of Satyartha Prakash.

It may be noted here that Dr. Upadhyaya is not happy with Charvaka so he disparagingly says that the Charvakas are Svabha-vadis. But to be Svabhava-Vadis is not a swear word. Almost all Indian darshanas are svabhavadis and in one era it was considered to be progressive to follow the Svabhava-vada.

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1. *भरतसिंह उपाध्याय, बौद्धदर्शन तथा अन्य भारतीय दर्शन, पृ. 821*

Udayana, an archenemy of the Charvakas, demonstrates how different darshanas followed the Svabhava-vada.

Nyaya

Causality in fact consists in setting a time limit to the emergence of the effect. 'Svabhāva-vāda', that answers to this description, says Udayana, is quite acceptable to the Naiyayika.[1]

Udayana

And if the third alternatives is the meaning of Svabhava-vada, it is acceptable to Udayana, for, such Svabhāva-vada is not at all different from 'hetu-vāda'.[2]

Vedanta

Vedanta also accepts svabhava-vada, because there Brahman is the only reality, the only cause and no auxiliary cause is admitted in this system. So it is not possible to explain the emergence of effects that follow a certain order from a single thing without the help of Svabhava-vada.

Sankhya

There is also 'eka-jatiya' cause viz., the Prakriti. There is absence of a variety of causes. So various things cannot take birth from the one cause. You cannot explain variety in the world without taking resort to the Svabhava Vada.

Buddhism

Udayana says that when a Buddhist establishes his doctrine of 'momentariness', then it may be pointed out to him that it is the nature of things to produce effects in a sequence. This nature of things is Svabhava-vada.

Poorva Mimansa

It says that it is the nature of 'a-purva' to produce an effect that lasts for a limited period. This acceptence of the nature of the 'apurva' is Svabhava-vada in its naked form.

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1. *Dr. Hem Chandra Joshi, Nyayakusumanjali of Udayanacharya, p. 37.*
2. *Ibid, p. 38*

When all the darshanas follow this way or that way the doctrine of Svabhava-vada, then how can it be pejoratively attached only to the Charvakas? And now the Charvakas do not follow Svabhava-vada. There was a time when it was the only alternative; but later they developed the concept of causality. That is why they say that it is kinva etc. that produce intoxication; That is why they tell us as to how betel leaf, arecanut and lime produce redness. To ignore knowingly or ignorantly the concept of causality of the Charvakas is intellectual dishonesty.

Russian Revolution and Atheism

When the Communists/Bolsheviks came to power in USSR in 1917 they believed that they had to break power of the churches, which fervently resisted the Revolution. Lenin argued that religion had to be actively combated because the dominant class had used it to oppress and suppress the workers and peasants.

The Bolshevik government imposed draconian measures : Church marriages and divorces would no longer be recognized; the "painless liquidation" of monasteries was ordered; churches were closed and put to other uses; clerics/priests lost their rights as citizens and they were barred from participating in politics; the teaching of religion was banned in both public and private schools.

In 1918 a new constitution was installed with the aim of separating the church from the state and defending the freedom of conscience. It stated :

"To secure for the working man true freedom of conscience, the church is separated from the state and the school from the church, and freedom of religious and anti-religious propaganda is recognized as the right of every citizen."

From 1918 to 1921, religious persecution continued unabated. In the midst of a civil war, the Russian Orthodox Church was accused of supporting the White armies attempting to overthrow the regime. As a result, all church property was nationalized. It is estimated that tens of thousands of bishops, clerics and laymen were killed or imprisoned.

In 1925 the League of Militant Godless was formed, which organized atheist lectures, films, museums, 'propaganda trains', and public demonstrations to unmask religious frauds. By 1930, the group had recruited three million members and by the mid-1930s, there were five million nominal members and 50,000 local groups. Children from eight to fourteen years old were enrolled in groups of 'Godless Youth'.

In 1930, a new constitution was adopted. In it, 'freedom of religions propaganda' was changed to the right to 'profess religion'.

Anti-religious propaganda was now legal but religious propaganda or evangelism was not allowed.

In 1936, there was an other constitution in which 'freedom for the performance of religious rites' was recognized, but religionists were not allowed to proselytize. A law of Religious Associations was also enacted in 1929, which banned the religious instruction of children by anyone except their parents. To convene a Sunday School or Catechism class was a criminal offense.

All religious groups had to be registered. Some churches were allowed to function and were leased buildings free of charge from the state; but more and more were shut down and it became difficult for religious groups to get official recognition from the state through registration.

These attacks on religion worsened during the Stalinist regime, but political purges were indiscrimate, affecting the atheists and believers alike. Prof Paul Kurtz, who was in Moscow with other humanists of the International Humanist and Ethical Union (IHEU) in 1989, writes : a participant at the dialogue reported that during this period the head of an atheist organization in the Soviet Union shared a cell in Siberia with a bishop of the orthodox church.[1]

Obviously, he was there owing to some political reasons, not because of atheism.

The Campaign that was waged against the churches, was also waged against Jewish synagogues, Muslim mosques and Buddhist Vihars : thousands were closed and priests, rabbis, mullahs and Bhikkhus were persecuted.

In fact, as Prof. Kurtz[2] say, 'there was no separation between church and state, for the state controlled all religious institutions'.

In 1941, during the World War II, virulent anti-religious campaigns were suspended. But in 1944 the Central Committee again decreed several anti-religious measures, and by 1945 atheist propaganda was intensified, especially against the Roman Catholic Church in Poland, Lithuania and the Ukraine. Although the Orthodox Church was permitted to publish a few religious journals, the Roman Catholic Church was allowed no publications.

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1. *Vern L. Bullough and Timothy J. Madigan, (eds) Toward A New Enlightenment, 1994, p. 179*
2. *Ibid, p. 179*

After the death of Stalin, though there was a temporary reprieve in the war against religion, in 1954 Khrushchev renewed the campaign. By 1966, more than ten thousand churches had been closed; (7500 orthodox churches and only three orthodox seminaries, remained open). The number of Baptist churches had dropped from 5400 to 2000; the number of mosques fell from 1300 to about 450 (there had been 30,000 mosques on the eve of the Revolution). The number of synagogues of the Jews, dropped from 450 in 1959 to 97 only.

In 1977, the Constitution was again revised. Its article 52 states : Citizens of the USSR are guaranteed freedom of conscience, that is, the right to profess or not to profess any religion, and to conduct religious worship or atheistic propaganda. Incitement of hostility or hatred on religious grounds is prohibited. In the USSR, the church is separated from the state and the school from the church.

Experts say that this marks an advance, as it 'guarantees' rather than simply recognises freedom of conscience, and 'anti-religious propaganda' is replaced with the more neutral 'atheistic propaganda'.

After the fall of Khrushchev, a Council for Religions Affairs was established to regulate religion. During the Brezhnev years, the anti-religions and pro-atheist policies were again followed, but on a less intensive scale. The Council has the power to decide whether a religious association has the legal right to exist or not.

Where there was atheism in the past in the world that was ruthlessly crushed by theists of all hues : pious people and the followers of a merciful god burnt alive Bruno and Charvaka mercilessly; tortured people like Galileo in an inhuman way; Charvakian literature was destroyed; great libraries were burnt down on the plea that if books were according to 'our holey book', no need of them; if they were against 'our holy book', then also no need of them, in every situation they were to be burnt. Some were stoned to death, some were lynched and others were badly treated. In USSR when the power came into the hands of Communist atheists, they crushed in the same way the theists of different hues.

We do not endorse either. If it is wrong to thrust theism, it is also wrong to thrust atheism. We will have to protect the human rights of an individual. There should be open discussion and both of them should present their views on different topics. If a theist is convinced, he should

be free to accept atheism and vice versa. What are theism and atheism? These are two ways to understand the reality.

In practice, the theists of various hues tried to impose their views in the past on others with the help of sword and gallows. Power blinded them and they thought that only they had truth exlusively with them. They did not stop at that. They insisted that everyone should accept 'their' that truth. That is the point where they bring in sword and gallows.

Atheists do not do so. They say : this is our view. If you think it is right, then accept it; if not, then reject it. They do not want to impose their views on others because they are guided by reason, not by revelation. That is why, we do not fully endorse what was done in USSR. There were mischiefs of political nature done by theists for which they were duly punished. That had nothing to do with ideological oppression. We believe in using the methods of critical intelligence, education, and debate to persuade people rather then resorting compulsion or tyranny as religionists did in the past or do where they are dominant owing to weakness of secular forces. We believe in humanism, not in that which is beyond man, so we are humane; while religionists believe in revelation and god, not in man, so they are what they are and what they were!

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Surendra Ajnat

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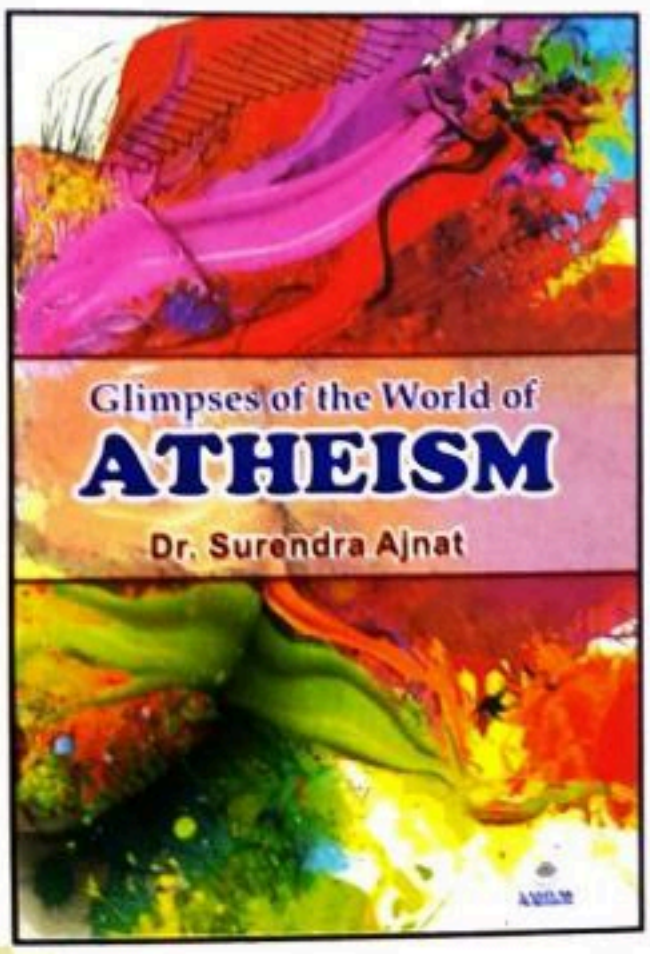
Born in 1948, **Dr. Surendra Ajnat** did M.A. in Sanskrit and Hindi respectively in 1971 and 1973. He is a University Gold Medalist and bagged two Doctor of Philosophy degrees. Well-versed in scriptures, Dr. Ajnat is a staunch rationalist and militant atheist. He has more than 70 books to his credit in Hindi, Punjabi, English and Sanskrit including those edited or/and translated. Some of his books have been translated into Marathi, Gujarati and Tamil. Several books of Dr. Ambedkar have been translated by Dr. Ajnat into Punjabi and Hindi. He also edited some books of Dr. Ambedkar with introductions. He stands for caste eradication and the upliftment of the downtrodden masses. He has been serving Ambedkarite organisations such as All India Samta Sainik Dal (Regd.), Ambedkar Mission Society (Regd.) Punjab and Ambedkar Bhawan Trust (Regd.) in different capacities since early 1970's. His articles generally appear in the Sarita, Bheem Patrika, Nawan Zamana, The Age of Atheism, Free Thought, Divya Jyoti and Vishva Sanskritam. For his selfless service and, contribution to the Ambedkarite Mission and movement, distinct Ambedkarite organizations have honoured him from time to time.



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